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REPORT

OF THE

Franchises and Constituencies Committee

SANGLI

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1939

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To

Captain His Highness Raja Shrimant
Sir Chintamanrao Dhundiraj *alias*
Appa Saheb Patwardhan, K.C.I.E.,
Raja Saheb of Sangli.

May it please Your Highness,

We, the members of the Committee, appointed to advise on franchises and constituencies with the object of securing as representative an Assembly as present circumstances permit, with due provision for adequate representation of minorities, of special interests and of backward and depressed classes, beg to submit our report as follows

Our report is unanimous on all matters, excepting the dissent of one of us, Mr. B. D. Shinde, on the subject of the number of representatives to be allotted to the Constituency of Inamdars, Saranjamdars and Tainatdars.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Letter of Appointment

1 This Committee was appointed under the following order dated 28th March 1939, of His Highness the Raja Sahib of Sangli —

In pursuance of the announcement, dated 22nd December 1938, His Highness the Raja Sahib of Sangli is pleased to appoint a Committee with the following personnel to advise on franchises and constituencies with the object of securing as representative an Assembly as present circumstances permit, with due provision for adequate representation of minorities, of special interests and of backward and depressed Classes

- 1 Principal D G Karve, M A (*Chairman*)
- 2 Mr M H Limaye, 3rd Councillor
- 3 Mr A R Mahishi 1st Councillor
- 4 Mr R R Bakhale
- 5 Mr P R Chikoli, B A
- 6 Mr B B Patil P A, LL B
- 7 Mr G K Godbole B A, LL B
- 8 Mr Hariharrao Narayaurao Patwardhan
- 9 Mr V G Jigani B A LL B
- 10 Mr Babasaheb Dnyaneshwar Stander
- 11 Mr S A Amin
- 12 Mr. Pandurang Hari Patil, B A

2 The Committee will submit its report to His Highness as early as possible

3. The Committee may, in its discretion, visit the Taloka towns and examine local witnesses to gauge public opinion.

4. The Reforms Secretary will work as Secretary of the Committee.

C. A. PATWARDHAN.

Raja Saheb of Sangli.

Constitutional Reform

2. The announcement referred to in His Highness' order contains the following important pronouncements on constitutional reforms in the Sangli State :—

“Turning now to the constitutional and political aspect of administration, may I say that I have not been unmindful of the supreme responsibility that lies upon me to make the administration of the State approximate to the standard approved by enlightened public opinion? When the recent constitutional changes of far-reaching importance to the future destinies of India were under discussion in British India, I realised that the State could not afford to remain stationary. I found, as I said in inaugurating the newly constituted Rayat Assembly nearly eight years ago, that it was ‘a juncture when the Sangli State ought also to move with the times and do what lies in its power to modernise the administration’.

“There is, however, one point to which I am sure you will attach due importance. As I said in one of my inaugural addresses to this Assembly, ‘India is such a vast country that it would be a mistaken policy to strain after uniformity from one end of the country to the other, and the various parts of India and especially those which have been enjoying some degree of sovereignty may well desire to remain perfectly free to develop along their own peculiar lines in certain spheres’. I said on another similar occasion that the States could still play an important part in preserving in the best interests of our motherland all that was best in their past and engrafting upon it what

might be best in modern ideas. 'It is only as we test the value and utility of changes', I continued, 'that we adopt them for permanent assimilation in our system'. In that spirit I believe that a time has now come for a further advance in the machinery for associating the people of the State with its day-to-day administration."

(a) "The number of the Sangli State Rayat Assembly shall be increased from 40 to 45, of whom 30 shall be elected

(b) A Committee with adequate popular representation shall be appointed on the question of redistribution of seats and the qualifications for franchise

(c) From the elected members there shall be chosen by me one member who shall hold the post of Minister in charge of Education, Medical, Co operative, Local Self-Government and Rural Uplift Departments. He will also be in charge of such works in the P. W. D. as will be transferred to his charge. A detailed list will follow

(d) The Rayat Assembly shall have power to vote on the demands of the Transferred Departments of the Budget subject to the condition that the pay and travelling allowances and pension of officers drawing a prescribed minimum salary shall be non-votable."

3 It will be seen from these extracts that the Constitutional policy which has led to the appointment of this Committee comprises the following relevant principles:—

(a) That the Sangli State ought to modernise its administration,

(b) That it would be a mistaken policy to strain after uniformity from one end of the country to the other and that the State should remain perfectly free to develop along lines suitable to itself,

(c) That a time has now come for a further advance in the machinery for associating the people of the State with its administration,

(d) That the number of members of the Sangli State Rayat Assembly is increased from 40 to 45 and the number of elected members from 20 to 30,

(e) That certain departments such as Education, Medical, Co-operative and Local Self-Government will be in charge of a Minister chosen from the elected members,

(f) That the Rayat Assembly shall have power to vote on the demands of the transferred departments

Value of British-Indian Experience

4 We are conscious that we have to recommend a scheme of franchises and constituency which will be suitable to the present stage in the constitutional evolution of the Sangli State. Comparing the new order in Sangli with similar systems in British India it can be said that the former is now taking its first steps on the road to responsible government, in a form comparable with Dyarchy. In this scheme the legislature has both financial and administrative control over a part of the functions of government, referred to in His Highness' announcement as the transferred departments. With the appropriate reservations, the Assembly will also possess greater effective control over legislation. As His Highness' order of appointment makes clear, an Assembly which will possess such extended powers must be made as representative as circumstances permit and it must contain adequate representation of minorities, of special interests and of backward and depressed classes. In making our recommendations we have always kept in view these aspects of His Highness' policy. We have derived great benefit from the work of such bodies as the Lorian Committee (Indian Franchise Committee 1932), the Southborough Committee (the Franchise Committee 1919) and the Hammond Committee (Indian Delimitation Committee 1935). We have drawn freely upon these sources, and we would recommend a reference to them for all those who would care to make an elaborate study of our recommendations. In our own report we wish to confine ourselves, as

far as possible, to the special considerations operative in the Sangli State. For an adequate appreciation of our report a reference to these Reports of all-India importance would be almost indispensable.

5 The mass of discussion that accompanied the introduction of constitutional changes in British India and the experience of these changes gathered during the last few years have immensely helped us in framing our conclusions and recommendations. While benefiting from experience and discussions elsewhere, we have kept in view not only the peculiar conditions of the Sangli State but also the desires and opinions of the local population. Our report may thus be taken to represent our considered advice on the points mentioned in His Highness' order, along lines laid down in His Highness' announcement.

Terms of Reference

6 Our terms of reference were 'to advise on franchises and constituencies with the object of securing as representative an Assembly as present circumstances permit with due provision for adequate representation of minorities, of special interests, and of backward and depressed classes.' We have accordingly considered the whole question of franchises and constituencies, and of the consequential changes in the electoral law and procedure. As the present constitution of the Assembly provides for general and special electorates, and for rural and urban franchise, our recommendations extend to special as well as general and urban as well as rural electorates. In view of the importance of securing adequate representation for minorities and backward classes, it has also been necessary to make recommendations regarding these classes. It will be seen that the order of appointment places no restrictions on the Committee within the sphere allotted to it. We have endeavoured to benefit by this discretion given to us and to recommend a complete scheme of the extension of franchise and the reorganisation of constituencies which, in our opinion will meet the neces-

status of the present stage of constitutional progress in the Sangli State.

Questionnaire

7 With a view to ascertain public opinion on the subject matter of the Committee's work, we issued a Questionnaire¹ to the public. In the Questionnaire the present composition of the Assembly was set out and in the light of the announcement of His Highness, which was reproduced, suggestions as regards franchises and constituencies were called for. A special feature of our questionnaire was an Appendix in which all the relevant and available information about the composition of the State population was supplied. We are glad to say that this effort to produce a detailed and informative questionnaire was more than justified by the quantity and the quality of the replies that we received. With a view to bring the work of the Committee to the notice of all sections of the State population, the Questionnaire was translated into Marathi and Kannada. As many as 600 copies were distributed over the State. We received more than 150 written statements in reply. From many of these it was clear that the writers had taken some pains to gather facts and to frame their suggestions. In not a few cases a statement supplied to us was only the final stage of a long process of local discussion. We can thus say that the work of the Committee aroused wide-spread interest in the State, and even beyond. The Questionnaire was published in the State Gazette and in some of the news papers. It can thus be assumed that everybody, who had anything to say on the subject referred to us, had a fair opportunity for doing so and, what is more, that the opportunity was actually used.

Itinerary

8 With a view to observe local conditions and further to gauge public opinion, our Committee undertook a tour² in the

1. Appendix I

2. Appendix II. Itinerary and Meetings of the Committee

State All Taluka Headquarters and Dodwad were visited. The distance thus covered exceeds 600 miles and the time taken was approximately a fortnight. A number of witnesses were examined. The oral examination was in all cases stimulating and helpful. In several respects the Committee gathered welcome information and view points from the witnesses who appeared before them. On the other hand in not a few cases in the light of fuller information given to them were able to offer more considered opinions than what the written statements contained. In all places local officials and many of the local gentry showed keen interest in the work of the Committee and helped us to carry on our activities with ease and efficiency. We can thus claim that our report contains a record of observations and recommendations which is based on a full knowledge of the circumstances and opinions that at present obtain in the Sangli State.

Time Taken

9 The order of our appointment enjoins upon us the duty of submitting our report as early as possible. We ourselves have always recognised the great importance of speed in such matters as those referred to us. As one of our members Mr R R Bakhale, who had been a member of the Lothian Committee, was engaged in the deliberations of an important Provincial Committee in Behar, we had to adjust our programme in a slightly intermittent fashion. The engagements of another of our members Mr P R Chikodi especially in connection with the Bombay Local Bodies Enquiry Committee had also to be taken into account in fixing our programme. We are glad to say that it was found possible to secure the presence of all our members at all important stages of our enquiry and deliberation, except for the unavoidable absence of Mr Bakhale during our tour of the Talukas. We trust that the time taken by us has not been longer than was absolutely necessary for the efficient discharge of our duties and that it has been justified by the completeness and the virtual unanimity, which characterise our conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

EXTENT OF THE ELECTORATE

Adult Franchise

10 In view of the principles of modernisation and popular association enunciated in His Highness's announcement, it was inevitable that the question of adult franchise should engage our attention. We agree that adult franchise is the natural goal of every constitution based on the principle of responsible government, which in some measure is now proposed to be introduced in the Sangli State. The Lothian Committee, which had to prescribe for a comparatively more advanced constitution in British India, has exhaustively discussed this question. The findings of that Committee helped us a good deal in assessing the administrative difficulties associated with the adoption of adult franchise. If the difficulties with regard to the available personnel for the organisation and conduct of elections based on such an extensive electorate appeared to be insuperable in British India, it need hardly be mentioned that for the Sangli State an early adoption of adult franchise can scarcely be indicated. Equally important, if not more, is, in our opinion, the argument based on considerations of political education. If the stability of the State is not to be jeopardised and if new methods of legislation and administration have to take firm root, the process of transformation must necessarily be a gradual one. While admitting adult franchise to be the goal towards which electoral reform in the Sangli State should move, we felt convinced that the immediate step should be such as would take account of these administrative and political considerations.

Our Recommendation

11 In this difficult task of reconciling the demands of progress with those of stability and continuity of administration,

definite quantitative limits cannot be easily drawn. From what we gathered of public desire with regard to an extension of franchise, we felt convinced that any enfranchisement which falls below 10 per cent of the total population will fail to satisfy the legitimate expectations of the public. We have no reason to doubt that this measure of enfranchisement will be compatible with the administrative and political considerations noted above. So far as the difficulties of the preparation of electoral rolls are concerned, we have satisfied ourselves, from our own observations as also from the evidence submitted to us by experienced officials, that enfranchisement of this size, along lines recommended in our report, will not put any insuperable difficulties in the way of the officers concerned. As regards polling arrangements, experience in British India has to be drawn upon. Those who have experience only of the working of the present limited franchise in the State are naturally sceptical of a material increase in the number of voters. In a State like Sangli, comprising small territories* which are separated from one another by long distances, the regulation of elections is bound to cause special difficulties. Not only is the number of available Polling Officers very limited, but the strength of the police, which has to be utilised for maintaining order, is also inadequate.

12. It is possible to overcome these difficulties by pressing into service non official polling officials of the requisite standing. Even in British India the employment of non-official polling officers is resorted to as a supplementary arrangement and serious objections had been urged before the Lothian Committee in this behalf. In the State, difficulties of finding non officials who will occupy a sufficiently high status and who will be able *to inspire confidence among the voters and candidates* are even greater. For this reason some of us would recommend dependance on alone official aid in this respect. It would, however, be strange if an experiment which is being tried in British India with tolerable success were without any moral for such an

* See attached map

advanced State like Sangli. We would therefore recommend that, as an experiment, the services of non-official polling officers should be requisitioned in selected areas. If the experiment proves a success the further extension of the practice may with confidence be considered by the State authorities.

13. We expect that the available police force will be adequate for the purpose of regulating elections to be held as per our scheme of franchise and contingencies. If, however, owing to unexpected difficulties an unbearable strain is caused on the police force, it can well be relieved by organising the elections in Sangli town on a different day than that on which the Taluka elections are held. As a general principle we are opposed to spreading the polling process in the State over more than one day. A prolongation of the period of election causes great and continuous strain on the resources of the administration. With a prolongation of the voting period, the possibilities of undue pressure being brought to bear on the voters in a concentrated form are also likely to increase. If the number of voters to be enfranchised according to our scheme can be properly polled with the help of the existing and available police force, we would not suggest the holding of elections in the State on more than one day. But if we were to choose between securing the enfranchisement that we recommend and the holding of all elections in the State on one and the same day, we would certainly prefer the former to the latter.

Direct Election

14. With a view to confer the voting right on the largest possible number of citizens without creating excessive work for the administration, a system of indirect election has occasionally been suggested. Some persons tendering evidence before us seemed to favour election to the Assembly either through panchayats or through primary meetings of villagers. The merits of this system have been considered by the Lohan Committee. We are inclined to uphold the conclusion of that

body Indirect election in any shape or form is injurious to the development of a bond of responsibility between the enfranchised citizen and his representative in the legislature In the group system of voting there is the special danger of suppression of free opinion and of victimisation at the hands of unscrupulous persons wielding local influence We, therefore feel that even though the immediate measure of enfranchisement may not be all that some people would desire it to be it is better now to start on the road of direct election through extensive electorates

Size of the Electorate

15 Wherever we went, we found an unmistakable evidence of a keen desire for a large extension of the franchise If good use made of the present franchise is a valid argument for a further extension of the right to vote, there is a strong case for considerable advance in the immediate future The ratio of voting members to the total electorate is very high in the State and compares favourably with many Districts in British India. Such a record speaks highly not only of the political consciousness of the voters themselves but also of the vigorous electioneering methods followed by the candidates and their supporters The present franchise has produced an electorate which is 3·4 per cent of the total population We expect that if our recommendations are put into effect, an electorate of from 3 to 4 times the size of the present electorate will be created This would mean that more than 1/3rd of the adult male population of the State and a considerable number of grown up women will be enfranchised In our opinion this would be no more than what is desirable and feasible under the circumstances

16 In making our recommendations as regards the franchises and constituencies, we have prominently kept in view the need for establishing as great an equality as possible among the different classes of voters Thus we have tried to achieve in the rural areas a percentage of voting population which will not be lower than what we consider to be absolutely necessary for the State as a whole The various qualifications, on which we

proposed to base the franchise, are intended to confer a voting right on an approximately equal proportion of all the important sections of the population. With the best of our efforts we must have failed, as similar bodies elsewhere have failed, to draw into the sphere of the electorate a sufficiently large number of the various sub-castes among the depressed classes. Our endeavour, however, has been to go to the farthest possible limit to confer the right to vote on all persons in the community who could be trusted to make a responsible and an intelligent use of the same.

17 As has been stated above, we found at a very early stage of our enquiry that an electorate which would represent less than 10 p. c. of the population would not satisfy the legitimate demand of the hitherto excluded sections of the community for inclusion into the privileged class of voting citizens. As a rule, however, we have tried to find out on what persons and sections the franchise can with propriety be conferred without creating insuperable polling and other difficulties for the administration. We attach more importance to these intrinsic considerations than to any preconceived notions as to quantitative limits. We expect that when the electoral rolls under the new franchise come to be prepared, it will be found that an electorate has been created which will satisfy the most urgent demands of the people without creating undue polling difficulties. It is, however, possible that the actual figures may belie our expectations. The material at our disposal is too scanty to enable us to make even an intelligent guess about the exact size of the total electorate under our scheme. We, therefore, recommend that

actual measure of
 say adjustments
 total population to
 line laid down in our report.

18 We now proceed to outline the scheme of general and special franchises that we have to recommend

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL FRANCHISE

Present Franchise

19 The present general franchise in the State is a purely property franchise. It is based, in the rural areas on the holding of land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs. 40 in the State as a whole and of Rs. 20 in Kuchl Taluka. Owing to the relatively low incidence of land revenue per acre obtaining in its villages, the qualifying limit has been specially lowered in the case of Kuchl Taluka. In urban areas ownership or occupation of house premises of a certain minimum rental value is construed to be a necessary qualification for the franchise. This minimum is for Sangli town Rs. 60 per year, the figures for Shahapur and Itahkavi being 48 and 36 respectively. For the rest of the areas within municipal limits occupation or ownership of premises of the rental value of Rs. 24 per year is considered as a qualification to vote. Both in rural and urban areas all persons who are assessed to the State income tax have a right to vote.

20 It will thus be seen that the limit of voting qualification is fairly high as compared with that which prevailed in the neighbouring Province of Bombay, under the Mont Ford constitution. It is however, to be noted that even with such a relatively high scale of qualifications as much as 3.4 per cent of the population has been at present enfranchised. It is true that the percentage of enfranchisement is higher in the urban than in the rural areas. Thus, while Sangli town has a voting population of 7 per cent of the total, the adjoining Sangli Taluka has an enfranchisement of no more than 2.4 per cent. The percentage of enfranchised to total population is even less in some of the other Talukas. It was not possible for us to get information as to the extent of enfranchisement among the various sections of

more apparent. The provision of an educational qualification as an alternative to the ownership and occupation of property has a special relevance to Indian conditions. In many parts of the State property is held and premises are occupied on the basis of the joint family system. By the necessities of that system only a limited number of adult and earning members of the family can be put on the voting register, if a record of ownership and tenancy is the only qualification for a vote. In the absence of an educational qualification it is not easy to provide for this considerable section of the population. We have, therefore, recommended the adoption of an educational test as an alternative to a property qualification. Other reasons than those recorded till now lead us to recommend that the educational qualifications to be prescribed for the Sangli State should not be so high as at present obtain in British India.

25. The progress of education is not even in the various communities. If either the Matriculation or Vernacular Final is prescribed as the educational qualification leading to enfranchisement, it is expected that voters in urban areas and in the educationally advanced communities will get a greater accession of strength than those in rural areas and in educationally backward communities. We desire, as far as possible, to secure an equality among the various parts of the State population in respect of the proportion of their enfranchised to total numbers. We would not follow the ideal of equality of proportion at the cost of the inherent soundness of the qualification for the franchise. Considering Indian conditions, and especially those in Sangli, we feel that the Vernacular Final or the Matriculation are unduly high standards for franchise purposes, at any rate in the present stage of educational progress.

26. A person who, not only knows the three R's but, has put in five years in an educational institution should, in our opinion, be presumed to have sufficient intelligence and responsibility to qualify him for a vote. Attainment of this standard is feasible to members of all classes and of all parts. It is true

that many parts of the State are as yet ill served by primary schools. We expect, if our recommendation in this respect be adopted, a growing demand for an increase in primary schools especially in rural areas. We understand that the official policy of the Sangh State has for a long time been that of free and compulsory primary education. The time has come to give fuller effect to this policy so that the State may have an educated electorate. We feel convinced that if the new constitutional reforms to be introduced in the State are to produce beneficent results, a large proportion of the electorate should be composed of educated men and women. We do not suggest that there should be a predominance of what are called the educated 'Classes'. Rather, we desire that among voters belonging to all communities and places a substantial portion should be composed of persons who have the means and the desire to gather information and to think for themselves.

27. Convinced as we are of the utility of this educational test as a qualification for franchise, we welcome the prospects of an automatic expansion of the electorate that will follow on the adoption of our recommendation. It is true that there will be difficulties in the way of securing verification for the claims of some of those who desire to be enlisted as voters on the strength of their having passed the vernacular standard in some past year, for which records are perhaps no longer maintained. It is equally true that for those who are learning in places other than recognised schools verification of their educational progress will be difficult to obtain. If the educational department of the Government is able to provide a suitable solution to their difficulties even these persons may be given the right to vote. But in this respect we are looking forward to the future rather than to the present.

28. As it will be known that the passing of the 4th vernacular standard confers, independently of any other qualification the right to vote, the records of that examination will be more carefully maintained by the Education Department.

This will mean that year after year a certain number of educated persons will be added to the electoral roll. From every point of view this will be an advantage. Incidentally the existence of such a qualification will create for all sections of the community an opportunity to increase their voting strength by undertaking educational reform among their own members.

Bare Literacy Inadequate

29. In this respect we desire to record our opinion that we are not impressed with the suggestion to confer the franchise merely on the basis of literacy. Literacy, in the sense of capacity to read and write, is, in our opinion, no reliable indication of the actual intellectual equipment or capacity of a person. With the present day methods of intensive spread of literacy, the quantitative expansion resulting from the literacy qualification appears to be impressive. But the inherent inadequacy of the literacy test and the danger of a relapse into illiteracy combine to render literacy an unsuitable voting qualification. In case the State introduces alternative educational courses which, in the opinion of its own competent authorities, are equivalent to the present 4th vernacular standard, we do not see any objection to extending the franchise to those who have passed the necessary test.

Ownership of Houses in non-Municipal Areas

30. Besides the inclusion of tenants and the introduction of an educational qualification there is one more change in the scheme of general franchise that we have to recommend. The classification of constituencies as between rural and urban has some meaning, though even here some arbitrariness cannot be avoided. But by prescribing an altogether separate franchise for the rural and the urban areas some cases of unfair exclusion from the franchise are likely to emerge. With the exception of Sangli town, and to a lesser extent Shalapur, there is hardly any place in Sangli State which can be termed a purely urban area. In all

these places including Sangli and Shahapur the qualification to vote based on ownership of assessed or assessable land is provided, in addition of course, to the more normal qualification based on house rent. On the other hand, in village areas there is at present a complete absence of a qualification based on ownership or occupation of house property. It may be argued that in the rural areas almost everybody who may be expected to own or to rent a house of the requisite value will most probably be included either as a holder or occupier of agricultural land. Even if a qualification based on house property is extended to the rural areas, there would be, we agree, some difficulty in assessing the capital or the rental value of a house with strict accuracy. Our attention has, however, been pointedly drawn to the claims of the more substantial artisans, traders and professional men living in villages to a right to enjoy the franchise. In our opinion the case of such residents of the village as say, the petty dealers and village functionaries such as the carpenters and the smith should not be lightly ignored. With a few reservations, therefore, we recommend the extension of the qualification based on house property to village areas.

Recommendations

31 In the light of our observations contained in the last Chapter and in this, we proceed to outline our own recommendations for the re organisation of the franchise. In the first place we propose to lower by half the limit of minimum rental value of house premises which entitles a person to the franchise. We accordingly propose that ownership or occupation of premises of which the annual rental value is, in Sangli town Rs 30, in Shahapur Rs 24 and in other municipal areas Rs 12, should be considered as a qualification for the franchise. It will be noted that we have not continued the special limit which was provided in the case of Rablavi, as we do not feel that there is an adequate reason to do so. In making our suggestion, in this respect, as in fact in regard to all other recommendations

with regard to the extension of the franchise, we have kept in view the twin considerations of administrative facility and political responsibility. With a lowering of the minimum limit of rental value, the corresponding limit of capital value will also be lowered. The present ratio of rental to capital value, as provided by the Assembly Rules, is 24 to 1000. We do not propose any alteration in this ratio.

32. As noted above, we have come to the conclusion that some provision for the award of franchise on the basis of house property should be made for the non-urban, i.e. non-municipal, areas. Considering the difficulties of assessing the capital or the rental value of house premises in small villages we felt that in villages with a population of less than 2000, the prescription of a qualification based on house property will be liable to great misuse. In assessing the capital value of house premises only for electoral purposes there is always a real danger that the valuation may be only fictitious. If, however, a village happens to possess a local body such as a Panchayat or Village Committee, the latter has to undertake the function of house valuation for purposes of its own finance. This valuation of houses is rendered less reliable. We, therefore, recommend that in places outside Municipal areas having a population of not less than 2000 and possessing a statutory local body such as a panchayat or a village committee, ownership of a house of the capital value of not less than Rs. 100 should be considered a suitable qualification for the franchise.

Village Bodies

33. We understand that the present number of village committees and panchayats is by no means very large. Even apart from the requirement of a suitable basis for franchise, we feel called upon to state in unmistakable terms our great concern for the progress of local representative institutions. For the success of the representative principle in the composition and working of local bodies like the legislative Assembly, the

existence of local representative bodies is almost a *sine-qua non*. It is only by experience and practice that a person learns the value of a vote and the need to use it with discrimination and responsibility. If our recommendation to enfranchise holders of house property in large sized villages gives an impetus to the establishment of village bodies, we would feel encouraged not only for the success of this but also of the other parts of our proposed scheme of enfranchisement.

34 *Coming to the qualification which is more characteristically a rural one, we recommend that ownership or occupation as tenant of alienated or unalienated land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs 10 in Kutch Taluka and Rs 20 in the rest of the State should form the basis of the franchise. In differentiating between Kutch Taluka and the rest of the State we have followed the existing arrangements. In view of the striking difference in the incidence of land revenue between this and the other Talukas we see no reason to differ from the underlying principle and practice of the present differential franchise. In prescribing the new minimum limits of assessed and assessable value we were guided by two main considerations. In the first place as in the case of urban franchise we would like to move only so far as we feel politically justified in doing. As in the urban so in the rural areas, we draw the line at halving the present limits. Considering that the enfranchisement in the rural areas has in the past been much lower than in the towns we would have felt justified in prescribing even a lower limit than what we have actually done. But the inclusion, for the first time, of tenants introduces an element the quantitative results of which cannot be easily gauged. From information made available to us by the local officials, it would appear that while keeping up the general limit of assessable value at Rs 24 would enfranchise a smaller proportion of the rural population than we desire to do, the lowering of the limit

* In this report ownership of land is taken to mean holding land in one's own right and occupation of land to mean occupation as tenant.

to Rs. 16 would enfranchise a much larger number than would fit in with the limit prescribed by us in an earlier Chapter

35 Having indicated 10 per cent as the minimum proportion of the enfranchised to the total population we have endeavoured to attain the same in the rural areas independently of the total or the urban enfranchisement. With our recommendation for the rural franchise, in which must be included the new educational qualification that we suggest, we hope to enfranchise as much of the rural population above 10 p. c. as can be trusted with the vote and as can be efficiently polled. Both for rural and urban areas we would recommend the following educational qualification

36 Persons who have passed the 4th vernacular standard or any other equivalent examination recognised by the Educational Department should be given the right to vote. We have been informed by experienced election officers and by those on whom will fall the responsibility of preparing the electoral rolls that almost insurmountable difficulties would be caused if the certification of the educational test is left to them. Experience in other places also confirms these fears. Our recommendation, therefore, is based on the expectation that the certification to be accepted for franchise purposes should be through the normal official examination.

37 We recommend the continuation of the present franchise based on being assessed to income tax under the State Income Tax Act.

Probable Numbers

38 In British India before final recommendations regarding the extension of the franchise were made, fairly reliable statistics of the numbers likely to be enfranchised as a result of each alternative qualification were available. In the Sangle State with the exception of the number of land owners paying a given amount of rent and of the Income-tax payers,

no dependable figures are available. Considering the expense and the labour, not to mention the delay, involved in collecting the mass of information necessary for a final adoption of the new scheme of franchises we did not feel justified in asking the State authorities to undertake such preliminary enumerations as in British India would have been considered to be absolutely necessary. We understand that for purposes of municipal reform statistics about tenancies in urban areas are being collected by some municipalities. We recommend that a Tenancy Register should be maintained by all municipal and local bodies so that the relevant information for electoral purposes may at any time be available.

39. We are informed that for the rural areas, there is no record of tenancies of agricultural land in the present village registers. We note that this is a serious difference between village records obtaining in British India and in Sindh. At any rate for electoral purposes, we would recommend the introduction, in a suitable place and form, of a reliable record of tenancy. If for some reasons this recommendation is not acceptable to the State authorities, we would suggest that the electoral rolls should be prepared by the Officers concerned from local knowledge regarding tenancies gathered through village officers and through rent-notes. The right of the tenants themselves, if they cultivate land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs 20 and more, to register their names as voters should remain unaffected by the absence of an official record of tenancies.

40. The population of the State according to the last census was 258442. By the time the new franchise is put into operation about nine years will have elapsed since the last census was held. Unless quite unexpected circumstances intervene, we can confidently expect an increase of the State population upto about 280000. On the basis of actual population obtaining at the time, we expect that the strength of the proposed electorate will not materially differ from what has been assumed by us as being necessary and feasible.

Summary

41. The following is a summary of our recommendations with regard to the re-organisation and extension of the general franchise:—

1 Ownership or Occupation of premises.

Ownership or occupation of premises of which the annual rental value is in Sangli town not less than Rs. 30, in Shahapur not less than Rs. 24 and in other Municipal areas not less than Rs. 12.

In places outside Municipal areas having a population of not less than 2000 and possessing a statutory village body e. g. a Panchayat or a Village Committee, ownership of a house of the capital value of not less than Rs. 400.

2 Ownership or Occupation of land.

Ownership or occupation as tenant, of alienated or unalienated land of the assessed or assessable value of not less than Rs. 10 in Kutchi Taluka and not less than Rs. 20 in the rest of the State.

3 Payment of Income-tax.

Being assessed to income-tax under the State Income-Tax Act.

4 Education.

Having passed the 4th vernacular standard or any other equivalent examination recognised by the Educational Department of the State.

CHAPTER IV.

WOMEN'S FRANCHISE

Importance of Increasing the Number

42 The importance of securing a more adequate enfranchisement of women than is secured under the system of a purely 'property' qualification was described by the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference in the following terms :—

"No system of franchise can be considered satisfactory or as likely to lead to good government where such a great disparity exists between the voting strength of the two sexes. We do not anticipate that the recommendations we have already made will reduce the disparity, nor do we think that they provide sufficiently for the enfranchisement of women. We feel, therefore, that special qualifications should be prescribed for women."

43 Setting out their reasons for the adequate enfranchisement and representation of women, the Lothian Committee observed in para 213 of their Report — "Taking all these factors into account, we have reached two conclusions. The first is that it is necessary that an adequate number of women should be placed on the roll to compel candidates to consider their interests and opinions to awaken political interest among women, and to make their votes an effective lever, particularly in providing reforms of special concern to women and children. The proportion we aim at is that the women voters should number about one-fifth of the whole, although owing to local conditions it may not be possible to reach this figure in every province. The second is that from two to five per cent of the seats in the provincial councils should be reserved for women for the first ten years. Unless special provision is made for them, it

seems improbable that more than a few, if any, women will secure election to the first legislatures, even with a larger women's electorate than we are able to propose. Considering the prejudice which still exists in India, as in other countries, against women taking part in public life, and the difficulties in the way of a woman travelling about to canvass a constituency, we consider it essential that during the formative period of the constitution, there should be in the legislatures a number of women sufficient to express their views and make their influence felt."

44. These extracts may be taken, in a general way, to represent our own position in respect of the enfranchisement and representation of women. The disparity between the enfranchisement of male and female population ranged in British India from 10 to 1 in Madras to 114 to 1 in Assam. Though women are not by law excluded from the present franchise in the Sangli State, we fear that the disproportion here must be even greater than the highest then obtaining in British India. The need of increasing the number of women voters is thus all the more urgent in Sangli State. We have not set before ourselves any preconceived minimum proportion of female to male enfranchisement. We have, however, reason to believe that if our recommendations for the enfranchisement of women are adopted, a proportion of women voters not materially different from that suggested in the Lothian Committee's report will be secured.

Women's Desire

45. In making our recommendations with regard to a special qualification for the enfranchisement of women, we were very much encouraged by the strong support received for that policy from both men and women witnesses coming before us. In two places, Sangli and Shahapur, very influential deputations of women appeared before us. Though they differed between and among themselves on several other points, they unanimously demanded as near an equality in representation with men as

is possible under the circumstances. The Sangli State is recognised all over India as a progressive State especially in respect of the position of and the awakening among women. We, therefore, feel that unless sufficient steps are taken to enfranchise a large part of women not only would the purposes indicated in our terms of reference remain unfulfilled but we would also be departing from the liberal traditions hitherto set by Sangli.

Difficulties of Property

46. The chief difficulty in the enfranchisement of women has hitherto arisen from the existence of a purely 'property' qualification for the franchise. In all communities, and especially in the Hindu community, the holding of property in the name of women is rare. This is due as much to the economic dependence of women as to other deep-rooted social factors. If it is desired, therefore, to confer the right to vote on women who may be presumed to possess the necessary sense of civic responsibility, other alternative qualifications must be prescribed. The first alternative qualification that suggests itself is naturally education. In fact, some of the women witnesses themselves felt some impropriety in claiming votes on account of the qualifications of their husbands and they were keen that some independent qualification such as literacy should be relied upon to bring a large number of women voters to the electoral roll. Much as we appreciate the sense of independence shown by these representatives of women, we feel constrained, in their own interests, to differ from them.

Education

47. As we have stated in the last chapter, we do not consider literacy by itself an adequate qualification for the franchise. As will be stated in detail in the following chapter, we are prepared to accept bare literacy as an alternative qualification for the enfranchisement of the Depressed Classes. For this exceptional treatment, two reasons appear to be conclusive. In the first place, considering the very low economic and social position of

the Depressed Classes, the attainment of even bare literacy on the part of a member of those classes can be taken to represent an intellectual and moral endeavour well worthy of recognition. Secondly, there are few means by which even a reasonable number of suitable members of the Depressed Class communities can be brought on the voting register. The case of women is, fortunately, a much better one. Though the progress of education among women is much less than that among men, there is not the same continuing apathy shown for women's education among the higher classes as is still unfortunately prevalent with regard to Depressed Class education. Education, especially primary education, is spreading among women and it may be expected to make further advances. From the analogy of the practice followed in British India, we are proposing to enfranchise the wives of male voters with the requisite qualification. As the need for increasing the number of women voters is thus met, and as we do not approve of literacy as an educational test for the award of the franchise, we recommend that the educational qualification entitling a woman to a place on the electoral roll should be the same as that prescribed for the general franchise i.e., passing the 4th vernacular or an equivalent standard.

Enfranchisement of Wives

48. The proposal to enfranchise the wives of voters with a requisite qualification is by no means an original or a unique one, as it is already in operation in British India. As, however, some misunderstanding and prejudice regarding this suggestion appears to prevail among some sections in the State, we reproduce the following relevant conclusion of the Lothian Committee.

"We recognise that the principle of enfranchising a woman on her husband's qualification did not find favour with the representatives of some women's organizations and others who gave evidence before us, on the ground that it would perpetuate the idea of the dependency of the women on the men and would merely duplicate the husband's vote. We think, however, that it is a reasonable view that marriage gives a community of

interest, and that in it a woman enters into a partnership with her husband which may well confer civic rights as well as domestic duties. Nor does there seem any valid reason why a woman should be more under the influence of her husband because her name is on the electoral roll for one reason or another. The women who have strong objections to the qualification are among those who can obtain a personal qualification through literacy."

49 It will be seen from the above that there is neither any inherent impropriety nor any special disability on women implied in the proposal to enfranchise the wives of male voters. If it is accepted that such a course is a proper method of bringing suitable women voters on the electoral roll, it may be urged that the wives of all voters should be so enfranchised. The acceptance of this proposal would increase the total electorate to a figure considered by us both administratively and politically undesirable in the present stage of constitutional evolution in the State. If the wives of all male voters are to be enfranchised and yet the total electorate is to be kept within the limits prescribed, it would be necessary to reduce the male portion of the electorate by approximately one half. Such a course would not be justified in the light of the legitimate demand of the male voters themselves. It would thus be clear that from purely administrative and constitutional considerations it would be necessary to confine the enfranchisement of wives only to a select part of the male electorate. There is also another consideration justifying this limitation. In the long run, through such intrinsic qualification as the educational, it is hoped that all women who care to be on the electoral roll will be enabled to do so. Having given legal equality to men and women in the ordinary qualifications which are so prescribed as to be easily attainable by both, it can be hoped that in due course the necessity for any special provision for the enfranchisement of women may be rendered superfluous. In the meanwhile, we must treat women as one of the main sections of the community and provide such special qualifications as will, in our judgment,

CHAPTER V.

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DEPRESSED CLASSES

Special Need

34 The Depressed classes form an important section of the population of Sangli. According to the Census of 1931 these classes represent very nearly 10 per cent of the population. Both on account of their numbers, as also on account of their importance in the social and economic life of the community, it is of the utmost importance to secure a fair representation for them both on the electoral roll and in the legislature. The difficulties of doing so, however, are even greater in the case of the depressed classes than in that of women. The depressed classes are so low in the scale both of property and education that unless very special qualifications are prescribed for them we cannot hope to secure their fair representation. Borrowing by experience gathered in British India, we have the following proposals to make with regard to special qualifications for the depressed classes.

Low Property Qualification

35 We do not think it worth while to go over familiar ground, already covered by the Loebian Committee, in search of a proper definition of the word 'Depressed Classes'. Excluding criminal and wandering tribes, as also aboriginal tribes, we confine the word 'depressed' only to those classes which belong to the Hindu fold and are traditionally considered as untouchable. As a first step towards facilitating an increase in the number of voters belonging to this community, we suggest that all property qualifications, both urban and rural, should be halved in the case of the Depressed Classes. Thus ownership or occupation of house premises in municipal areas of an annual

rental value equal to half the minimum prescribed for the general franchise would entitle a depressed class person to a vote. The same principle of halving the minimum amount of assessed or assessable value of land in the case of persons belonging to the depressed classes would apply in the rural areas. The qualification based on ownership of a house in villages of not less than 2000 population and possessing a statutory village body would be Rs 200 in the case of a depressed class house-owner as against the general limit of Rs 400.

Adult Franchise

56 The institution of a low differential qualification in favour of the depressed classes is calculated to increase the number of depressed class voters to some extent. We do not expect, however, that by this means we shall materially increase the voting strength of the depressed classes. We have to be guided in this, as in other parts of our enquiry, by considerations of political suitability and administrative convenience. It is for these reasons that we reject two proposals made to us. The first was to introduce adult franchise for the depressed classes. This appears to us to be a wrong way of approaching the problem. Though it is true that adequate representation should be secured for members of the depressed classes, it is undesirable both for these classes as also for the rest of the community that unsuitable material should be brought on the voters' list. While trying to improve the economic and educational conditions of these classes we must confine the franchise only to those members of these communities, who can be entrusted with the responsible duties of active citizenship. In the case of the State population as a whole, we have rejected the proposal for adult franchise as being unpracticable for the present. We do not see any reason to waive those objections in the case of the depressed classes.

Household Franchise

57 Another proposal was to introduce what is called the household franchise. Besides being simple, this qualification

would immediately solve the problem of inequality of voting power among the various sub-castes of the depressed classes. One objection, however, appeared to us to be almost conclusive against this suggestion. The houses of members of these classes are very often most rickety and haphazard constructions. In not a few cases they are actually shifting. To make a household a unit for franchise purposes is under these circumstances most undesirable. Moreover, the adoption of this suggestion is subject, in large measure, to the criticism urged above against adult franchise among the depressed classes. We have, therefore, to choose our alternative qualifications for the depressed classes in other directions.

Bare Literacy

58. As with the property qualification, so with the educational qualification we suggest a lowering in favour of the depressed classes. For reasons already recorded, we do not consider education below 4th vernacular standard as a sufficient qualification for the franchise. As a mark of our readiness to grant special facilities for the enrolment of depressed class voters, and in view of the greater proof of intellectual and moral betterment that a person belonging to the depressed classes gives by his lifting himself from illiteracy to literacy, we are prepared to consider bare literacy as an adequate qualification for franchise among the depressed classes. We have thus placed in the hands of the depressed classes themselves and of their friends an instrument which they might use without limit in attaining their proper share of the voting strength in each constituency.

Village Servants

59. Taking into account the servile status of many members of the depressed classes, we were led to suggest in their case a modified interpretation of property qualification. Some castes among the depressed classes, especially the Mahars, perform hereditary services in each village. For the discharge of their allotted functions the Mahars as a body are responsible. If,

therefore, the right to vote is granted to all those who are liable for village service, it would amount to adult franchise for the Mahars. For considerations already noted and also in view of the probable unfairness to other castes among the depressed classes, such wholesale enfranchisement of Watandar mahars or any other caste is to be ruled out. We understand, however, that in the State there is a system by which the body of the village mahars organised in their 'Budkhas' and 'Takshumas' depute for each year a certain number of representatives to do the official duty. In point of fact, duties may very often be performed by other members of the community. But the legal liability for the time being rests on these representatives. Details of the system by which the Mahars select these representatives are not known. But it is gathered that in no village does the number of these representatives exceed 4. For the town of Sangli our information was that there are 8 representative Mahars at any given time. We suggest that all these representative mahars, for whom a record should be maintained should be enfranchised.

Wages

60 This would, however, be no solution for the difficulties of members of other communities among the depressed classes, whose position has caused so much concern in British India. Much as we appreciate the claims of these castes we find it impossible to suggest any other additional alternative than the following. The State and statutory local bodies, like municipalities employ a large number of depressed class servants. Judging from the low position that the depressed classes now occupy, their earnings must be considered as forms of property even though it is normally called a wage. In the absence of any other reliable or promising indication of their status we are prepared to recommend wages earned in Government and semi Government departments as a suitable qualification for franchise among the depressed classes. We suggest that the minimum limit in this regard should be Rs. 5 per

month. By this means the voting strength of at least one or two sub-castes among the depressed classes might be added to.

61. We have no material on which to base any estimates about the probable numbers that would be thus enfranchised. We do not, however, apprehend that by these means persons belonging to the depressed classes would, for the immediate future, be enfranchised in such large numbers as to disturb the general expectations already recorded.

Summary

62. The following is a summary of our specific recommendations as to the special qualifications for the depressed classes.

"In respect of the qualifications arising out of ownership or occupation of premises and land (Items 1 and 2 in General Franchise) the required figure of annual rental and assessed or assessable value will be halved in the case of persons belonging to the Depressed Classes. (Lothian Committee's definition).

Literacy as verified in the prescribed manner.

Being on the attendance list of Watandar Mahars as per present system of 'Buddhas or Takshimas' in each village. (We expect that not more than 4 Mahars will be so enfranchised in each village.)

Being in the permanent employ of a government department or a local body and drawing wages at a rate not lower than Rs 5 per month."

CHAPTER VI

SPECIAL ELECTORATES

Their Rôle

63. We now come to the important subject of the distribution of the 30 elective seats among the various constituencies. Before we proceed to make our recommendations with regard to the territorial constituencies, we must outline our views about what are called the Special Electorates, such as Graduates, Tainatdars, Commerce etc. We are not aware as to the exact policy underlying the present scheme of special electorates where in besides these widely accepted electorates, members of municipalities and of Executive Committees of Co-operative Societies have also been formed into special constituencies. It is probable that these constituencies then appeared to be convenient and of sufficient administrative and social importance to merit separate recognition. In view, however, of experience gained, here as elsewhere, the time has come to reconsider the whole policy underlying special electorates.

64 In our opinion, special electorates are neither an exceptional nor a temporary phase of the system of representation. The life of the community which, in important respects, it ought to be the attempt to reproduce in the legislature, contains many important aspects, which are not taken into account in the system of conferring one vote on every enfranchised citizen. In modern societies, the economic side of life is gaining in importance. Unless special constituencies representative of the various interests are created, these important sections of the community will have to go without a chance to represent their claims and interests. Even apart from the need to represent interests, it is necessary to make available within the legislature sound expert knowledge of those departments of national life, acquaintance with which cannot be normally expected in the average member of the Assembly. Thus, in our

opinion representing important social interests and furnishing expert knowledge on complicated yet momentous subjects of frequent discussion in the legislature will continue to be the abiding justifications for having special electorates.

65. This principle, of securing in the legislature the presence of persons qualified to speak with authority and knowledge on complicated questions of public policy, has been described as functional representation. We recommend that this principle should be adopted as an integral part of the scheme of constituencyencies in Sangh State. Here, as elsewhere, care has to be taken to see that functional representation is not granted to an extent which will disturb the normal balance of parties or of opinion in the representative body. In a body of 45 members, out of whom, as it is now proposed, 30 would be elected, we feel that the present number of special electorates, viz. 7 is near the limit which is both adequate and necessary. We do not, therefore, approve of any serious modification of this number.

Existing System

66. We do not, indeed, recommend that the existing scheme of special electorates should be continued in-tact. As will be noted below, we have several modifications to suggest in the existing scheme. As fresh interests in society grow in importance, room will have to be found for them by removing such interests as have ceased to possess any special justification. The following are the existing special electorates :—

1. Inamdars, Tainatdars etc. :— Such amongst these as are alienees of a village or part of a village, or are entitled to a cash Tainat of not less than Rs. 200 per annum, send two representatives to the Assembly. The present voting strength of the constituency is 96.

2. The Graduates' Constituency :— All Graduates of recognised Universities of a standing of not less than three years form this constituency which returns two members. The present strength of this constituency is 277.

3 The Sangli Chamber of Commerce is a constituency by itself, consisting of all persons and firms who are on the membership register of that body. Their number is at present 192, from among whom the representative of the Chamber is elected.

4 Members of Executive Committees of Co-operative Credit Societies who at present number 414, form a separate constituency returning one member to the Assembly.

5 All sitting members of the Municipalities in the Sangli State, other than the Sangli Municipality, form a special constituency returning one member to the Assembly. The strength of this constituency is at present 69.

Our Suggestions

67. We have given most careful consideration to the utility and claims of all the existing special electorates. Our own considered views with regard to these we shall now proceed to set out in detail.

Inamdars and Tainatdars

68 Inamdars and Tainatdars — We recognise that as representatives of an order which has played an important part in the history of the State and even now as an important part of the administrative and revenue machinery, this class merits special recognition. Considering present and future trends of legislative policy, the presence in the Assembly of a special representative of this class would appear to be essential. While agreeing to the need of special representation to this important vested interest, we feel called upon to make two modifications. Firstly, the limit of Rs 200 cash Tainat is in our opinion too high to secure a representative body of electors from among this order. We therefore, suggest that this limit should be lowered to Rs 100. Our second suggestion is that the representation given to this interest should be reduced to one member only. This suggestion is based on our view that as far as

possible all functional representation should be limited to one representative each for the electorates specially recognised. In this case we have also been led to the same conclusion by the impossibility of leaving two seats to the Tainatdars while more pressing claims from other special and territorial electorates go unsatisfied.

69. We wish, in this place, to refer to a suggestion that was made to us with a view to increase the voting strength of this constituency and to make it more truly representative of the landlords' interest. It was suggested that all landlords, irrespective of their exemption or otherwise from the payment of land revenue, who possess land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs. 100 per year, should be formed into the Landlords' Constituency, which should take the place of the present Tainatdars' Constituency. We cannot see our way to approve this suggestion. In our opinion the special justification of the Tainatdars' Constituency is not that they are big landlords but that they have a vested interest arising out of their relationship both with the State and with the other classes in the community. In so far as the Landlords' interest is not represented through the general electorates, which for a long time to come would be composed chiefly of owners of the landed property, the representative of the Tainatdars may be trusted to represent what may be called the special landlords' view. We therefore, leave this constituency as an Inamdars', Tainatdars' and Saranjamdars' Constituency.

Graduates

70. Graduates:—Though Graduates constitute a separate electorate in the Sindh State, as in the British Indian Provinces and in some foreign countries, it cannot be said that they constitute a separate interest in the community. In our opinion the proper rôle of this constituency is to recognise by special representation the element of learning and culture obtaining in the society. With this principle in view we feel that the allotment of two seats to graduates, who now number only 277,

cannot be justified. On the other hand we do not sympathise with the suggestion that as a number of graduates are at present returned and are likely to be returned in future by the general constituencies, the separate provision for the graduates' electorate should be altogether removed. Even granting for the moment that graduates in sufficient numbers will continue to be returned by the expanded electorates of the future, we feel that an opportunity to elect to the legislature a person who, by his intellectual and academic attainments can properly represent the learning and the culture in the community should not be taken away from those who bear the recognised stamp of modern University education.

71 Some of those, who agreed to the continuation of this constituency, had suggested that Diploma holders of several vernacular and English teaching Institutions should be included in this constituency. We recommend that the list of recognised universities should be revised from time to time in the light of action taken by Governments in adjoining British territories. We cannot, however recommend the inclusion of Diploma holders. We do not desire even remotely to attach any stigma to individual members of these respectable classes of citizens, many of whom may in fact be at least as true representatives of learning and culture as their graduate fellow citizens. In this respect, however, there can be no absolute standard. Practical considerations as to the delimitation of constituencies lead us to the conclusion that it is not desirable to go beyond the degrees of recognised Universities as a qualification for inclusion in this constituency. Once this limit is left behind it will not be possible to draw the line between one diploma and another.

Commerce

72 The Sangli Chamber of Commerce is a constituency which is designed to represent the view point of the mercantile community on public questions in general and on economic ones in particular. The Chamber is a body of long standing and from information supplied to us it seems that it has been doing

regular and useful work. Representations were made to us to the effect that this constituency should be turned into a general Traders' Constituency, and that individual dealers in various commodities such as precious metals, cloth, groceries etc., should be included in it. We do not approve of this suggestion inasmuch as we agree with the Southborough and the Hammond Committees in holding that representation for this special interest should be preferably given through recognised associations. The Hammond Committee observed, "It is only through recognition of Associations, that the return of men of weight, qualified to give expert advice on intricate commercial and industrial questions, can be secured. For an organised body can focus commercial opinion, and a member returned by such a body represents the corporate and the collective view of the Commercial Community." If bonafide commercial associations come into being, they should, in our opinion, together with the Sangh Chamber of Commerce form a Commerce Constituency. All commercial associations, which have a standing of at least two years, are registered, and do not place any artificial or unjustifiable restriction on their membership, should be eligible for being included in this constituency. As the Southborough Committee has observed, what is to be secured in such constituencies is not so much the representation of all eligible members possessing the interest, but of the special viewpoint and the expert knowledge. This is better secured through recognised associations than through individuals.

Co operative Societies

73 We understand that the Co operative Societies' constituency was inaugurated 9 years ago, with a view to give special prominence to that movement and thus to encourage its growth. Whatever value this constituency may have had by way of propaganda in the earlier stages of the movement, we do not see any justification for its continuance. The co-operative movement is a recognised method for the betterment of the agriculturists and of persons of small means. Through their own organisations co-operators have been carrying on propaganda

which is calculated to further their movement. If the persons for whom the movement is intended derive the benefit which it aims to produce, no adventitious aid in the form of recognising a separate constituency of co-operative societies would be necessary. It is extremely rare for co-operative institutions to be the subject matter of important legislation. In fact we understand that the Co-operative Societies Act first introduced into the State in 1913 is only recently being amended. In so far as the Co-operative Societies as institutions and their members as agriculturists, have any special interest to represent or grievances to ventilate they can effectively do so through the normal channels of territorial representation. In no other part of India has such a constituency been recognised and we fail to see any justification for its continuance here.

Municipalities

74 With the extension of franchise in all areas, urban and rural, and with an increase in the number of seats to be allotted to the various territorial constituencies, we do not deem it necessary or desirable to retain the Municipalities' constituency. The underlying principle of indirect election does not appeal to us, nor do we feel that the Municipalities as such have any special interest, which cannot be represented by the member returned by the constituency in which the Municipal area falls. The experience of the working of this constituency, hitherto gained is also not such as to justify its continuance in the face of these considerations.

New Special Electorates

75 Having thus retained three out of the seven existing special seats, we proceed to suggest the institution of three new ones. Industry in its organised form is an important feature of modern economic life. It is making its appearance in the Sangli State in an unmistakable form. Mills using power and other places of manufacture not using power but employing a large number of hired workers have come into existence. The

establishment of this form of industry gives rise to special problems of taxation and legislation. It is on this account that in British India a separate constituency representative of organised industry has generally been recognised. Here, as in the case of the commerce constituency, we would prefer representation through members of recognised associations rather than through individual industrialists. A body called the *Karkhandar Sangh*, we understand, has recently been established in the *Sangli State*. If this body takes root and functions as similar bodies in British India do, we would recommend that its members should form the Industries' Constituency returning one member to the Assembly.

Industrial Associations

76 The conferment of the right of a special electorate on members of the association should be subject to two conditions. Firstly, the membership of that body should not, under its rules, be denied to any industrial establishment, which may be covered by the definition of a factory adopted by the Factories Act for the time being in force, or passed by the Legislature. In the second place, the extension of this special franchise to members of similar bodies, if and when they come into existence, should be provided. These bodies must, however, be registered associations and must have a standing of not less than two years.

77 If the *Karkhandar Sangh* fails, for one reason or another, to qualify for this right, we recommend that all places of employment to which the provisions of the Factory Act apply, or are designed to apply, should form the Industries' Constituency. In this case a special electoral roll will have to be prepared by the Election Officer, whereas if the *Karkhandar Sangh* and similar associations are recognised as representatives of organised industry, all those, who are members in good standing on the rolls of the associations, may be taken to form the Industries' Constituency.

Labour

78 For the same reasons for which we suggest an Industries' Constituency, we recommend the formation of factory labour into a separate electorate. The very existence of a large scale industry creates a special class of hired labourers having not only special interests, but, what is more, special need of legislative protection. It is for this reason that in British India a policy of equating, as far as possible, the special representation of labour with that of the capitalists and employers has been followed. We approve of this policy for the Sangli State and recommend the formation of a labour constituency, sending one member to the Assembly. The best way, in our opinion, to grant representation to labour is through members or executives of recognised Labour Associations. We do not know of the existence of any such bodies in the Sangli State at present. If such bodies arise and are recognised as bona fide Labour Associations, we would confer on them the right to elect a representative to the Assembly. If, however, the factory workers continue to remain unorganised, their representation to the legislature should be secured through a specially formed constituency. All workers, i.e., those who are employed, in other than supervisory or clerical capacity, in places to which the definition of a Factory applies, and who have put in more than six months' service should be considered to form the Labour Constituency.

With regard to the detailed organisation of the Labour and Industries seats, experience gained and provisions made in British India will prove of immense help. We would recommend that in making detailed provisions for these constituencies, the relevant rules in British Indian Provinces should be followed wherever possible.

Hand-loom Industry

79. We have now to suggest the institution, almost for the first time in our country, of a separate constituency for the hand-loom weavers. We are impressed by two considerations

in making this considered recommendation. The hand-loom weaving industry, both in its old and new forms, is a very important part of the economic life of the State. The industry has attracted sympathetic attention from quarters high and low, in the State and in British India. There are special problems connected with the re-organisation and reconstruction of this industry. The continued attention of the State and the legislature must be bestowed on these problems, if this industry is to survive and to live as a vigorous limb of the economic life of the State. The most dependable way of securing this continued attention at the hands of a representative legislature is to provide for a special representation to those who are engaged in this industry.

80. Another reason leading us to this conclusion is the position of the hand-loom industry in relation to the modern organised industry. It is admitted on all hands that this latter should be represented in the legislature by special provisions, such as a separate constituency. If, however, the hand-loom industry, both in itself and as a representative cottage industry, is an equally important part of industrial life, its position must be considered as co-equal with organised industry. In fact, owing to the existence of something like a conflict of interests between these two forms of manufacture, we feel that justice will not be done till both of them get an equal treatment. In the oral evidence, especially at Rahkavi and Shabapur, a strong demand for such representation was made. It will be noted that our intention in forming this constituency is not to confer the right to send a special representative on the middlemen or the financiers, who are associated with the functioning of this industry. We, therefore, propose that in this constituency, the voting unit should be the manager of a family or head, which owns one or more looms, and works them without the use of power and with the assistance of less than ten hired labourers. Our idea in thus limiting the constituency is to keep out factory owners, who would be entitled to representation through the Industries' constituency.

CHAPTER VII

TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES— RESERVED SEATS

81 Having allotted 6 out of the 30 elective seats to special electorates we are left with 24 seats to be distributed among the territorial constituencies. In this field, however, we are confronted with an initial problem. The purpose of the legislature is to represent all sections of the community. Our terms of reference it might be noted make a special mention of this requirement. In our opinion, there are three portions of the population of the State, which are not likely to secure due representation, unless special steps are taken to that effect. The Depressed Classes the Muhammadans and Women are the three sections we have in view.

Women

82 We do not imply that the case of women is, in all respects, comparable with the other two.

In fact, in our opinion it may be possible, after women have been familiar with public life for some years that a sufficient number of women representatives will find a seat in the Assembly. The present state of public life and public opinion in the Sindh State is not, however, such as to lead to a hope that representation of women will be secured through the channel of a general election. Many witnesses, men and women, who appeared before us seemed to confirm this opinion. Equally emphatic was the opinion recorded before us that in the immediate future a certain number of elected seats for women members should be assured to them so that they might attend to the special problems of women and children. In view of the immediate need to secure some representation and the ultimate hope that such representation will be secured through the normal

process of a general election, we are confining ourselves to an essentially transitory recommendation. We recommend that two seats should be reserved for women out of a total of 24 territorial seats.

83 As this is the reservation of a minimum representation, leaving women candidates free to compete for even more seats, we do not think that the allotment of a larger number will be justified. On the other hand, a reduction of women seats to one will unduly limit the constituency to some single place in the State which in all probability would then be Sangli. We are of opinion that women in the mofussil who have shown sufficient interest in public affairs should get an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the working of the representative system and the legislature. As far as we could see, Shahapur is the only place outside Sangli, where political consciousness among women was visible. In the case of special representation secured through reservation of seats it is important that only such constituencies, as can be expected to contain a decent number of women voters and to put forth a sufficient number of women candidates, should be considered as suitable women's constituencies. Our recommendation, therefore, is that Sangli and Shahapur towns should be the two constituencies in which one seat should be reserved for a woman candidate. If in the future any rural constituency shows signs of sufficient political awakening among women, we would have no objection to its claims for a reserved seat, by rotation or otherwise, being considered.

84 Having determined the number of seats, and the constituencies where they are to be reserved, the next question is regarding the composition of the electorate. On this subject we have received rather conflicting evidence. It is natural that in their present state of inexperience some women should desire, for a time, to be left free to canvass and to work in an electorate composed exclusively of women. Many of the men also feel that inasmuch as representation is granted to women primarily for ventilation of their own special needs it is reasonable that

the representatives should be chosen by the women voters themselves. Both among men and women it is possible that some social awkwardness is felt in the prospects of men candidates canvassing among women and women candidates canvassing among men.

Joint Electorate

80 We have given this subject our most careful consideration. We have examined not only local conditions and opinion but also experience in British India. We agree that this is primarily a matter in which the wishes of the local body of citizens should prevail. But our own opinion is definitely in favour of a joint electorate of men and women. We were impressed by the strong desire for joint electorates expressed by the women's deputation in Shabapur. The deputations that appeared before us on behalf of Sangh women demanded separate electorates for women as only a temporary measure. If we hope that, sooner or later, women should be expected to get due representation through the general electorate it is of the utmost importance that we should do nothing which will reduce the possibility of these expectations being fulfilled. Experience of other separate electorates does not encourage a hopeful attitude towards them. On the contrary, separate electorates by habituating its members to a narrow and sheltered sphere render them unwilling and perhaps unable, to plunge into a general election. For the present, at any rate, we do not doubt that joint electorates should be the channel through which women candidates should seek election. After practical experience has been gained, we expect that the present prejudice that lingers in some quarters against joint electorates will vanish. If even in the light of experience these prejudices persist or if other unforeseen difficulties arise, the situation may be reconsidered at a later date. Experience shows that the way from joint to separate electorates is always open, but that from separate to joint electorates is practically non-existent.

Depressed classes

86. As stated in an earlier Chapter, we have drawn freely upon British Indian experience and discussions. All the same, we have tried our utmost not to depart from local requirements and susceptibilities. This policy was nowhere more appropriate than in dealing with the representation of the Depressed Classes and the Muhammadans. The Depressed Classes form about 10 per cent of the total population. In an elected legislature their interests can only be looked after by representatives chosen by them. Howsoever others may try to uplift them or to help them, they are entitled to be given an opportunity to represent their own views and to influence the State policy in respect of their own grievances. In the Chapter dealing with special qualifications for franchise among the depressed classes, recommendations have been made which, we hope, will enhance the number of depressed class voters. But even in the most favourable areas, this number will not be so great as to ensure representation through their own members to the depressed classes. This situation could possibly have been met by providing a separate electorate for the Depressed Classes. Such a step, however, we consider to be most harmful to the depressed classes themselves and to the rest of the community. The depressed classes are an integral part of Hindu society. That they are labouring under very serious social, religious and economic disabilities is undoubted. But there is a welcome movement all over the country for the removal of these difficulties. In the light of these favourable trends of opinion and activity, there is reason to hope that the depressed classes will not remain depressed very much longer, and that they will be ultimately merged with the rest of Hindu society. This prospect may be distant, but having assured the depressed classes of adequate representation, we do not feel justified in recommending any step that would render such a prospect altogether impossible.

87. The provision of separate electorates for the depressed classes would for all practical purposes perpetuate their social

isolation. There would be no occasion for persons belonging to the higher classes to meet persons belonging to the so called depressed classes on a purely civic and political plane. This would be a disadvantage to both and would create a narrow mindedness and class loyalty, which would be harmful to the normal working of a representative Assembly. We, therefore, recommend that the depressed classes should be assured of adequate representation by the process of reservation of seats to be filled by members of their community through the general electorate.

88 The complicated arrangements made for the representation of these classes under the Poona Pact are in our opinion unsuitable for adoption in Sangli State. They do not avoid the fact or the principle of a separate election. They make it only more costly and cumbersome.

Reserved Seats

89 Having accepted the principle of reservation of seats in the general electorate we recommend that the seats to be so reserved should be two. Excluding the special constituencies the available number of territorial seats is 24. Judging from the population of the depressed classes two would be the nearest number to which reservation of seats for them would appear to be justifiable. It has been represented to us from certain quarters claiming to interpret the depressed class view point, not only for the Sangli State but for all India, that a much higher number than what the depressed classes are entitled to on the basis of population should be allotted to them. This suggestion, which is popularly called Weightage, is, in our opinion, most unjust towards the other communities. Having secured to each important minority just representation, any further weightage constitutes an unjustifiable encroachment on the proper share that ought to be open to competition without reference to any communal appeal. We are persuaded, by our own reasoning as also by experience in British India, that apart from weightage being an inherently unjustifiable practice, like the

other principle of separate electorate, it defeats its own ostensible purpose and, in fact, works to the injury of the classes who seem to be favoured by it. In a representative Assembly, the interests of each section are assured by securing the good will and the co-operation of all members. Such practices, as weightage and special electorates, segregate the minorities in a manner, which is harmful to the emergence of a bond of common interest and opinion among members of a legislature. We, therefore, disapprove of the number of reserved seats in any case being more than what is justified on the basis of population.

Distribution

90. The two seats that will be reserved for the depressed classes according to our recommendations should be distributed as follows :—

The population of the depressed classes is the largest in Miraj Prant, Knchi, and Mangalvedha talukas. In Sangli proper the population is only 1238, i. e., less than in Shahapur and Shirhatti Talukas. Taking into account the progress in education and social activities made by the members of the depressed classes in Sangli, we recommend, that Sangli, Miraj Prant, Knchi and Mangalvedha, should share the two reserved seats among themselves. Our detailed suggestion would be that Sangli and Miraj Prant constituencies should, at alternate elections, contain one seat reserved for a member of the depressed classes. The other reserved seat should be similarly shared between Mangalvedha and Knchi Talukas. We are led to make this suggestion regarding alternate possession of a reserved seat by two constituencies, only to avoid the greater evil of confining this reservation only to two places and leaving the rest of the Talukas without any incentive to public activity among the depressed classes.

Muhammadans

91. The need of keeping local circumstances and opinions in the very forefront of our enquiry is equally, if not more,

prominent with regard to the Muhammadans. In almost all relevant respects, the position of the State is peculiar. By a long tradition of impartial and protective rule, the State authorities have succeeded in inspiring among the Muslims a sense of confidence in their government, which is not less strong than that entertained by any other community. Barring very rare exceptions, the relations between the major community and the Muhammadans have been extremely cordial. The evidence, that was laid before us both in the shape of written statements and oral replies, was conclusive on two points. Firstly, the majority community, while not admitting, in all cases, that reservation of seats for the Muhammadans was necessary, was prepared to concede that if the Muhammadans themselves desired that step, seats proportionate to their population should be reserved for them. Several instances of recent elections of members of the Muhammadan Community at the hands of joint and predominantly Hindu electorates were brought to our notice. Such experience leads us to conclude that a regime of joint electorates will work in the Sangli State as a satisfactory method of assuring to the Muslims the representation that they are entitled to, without either breaking the unity of the citizen body or encouraging any section to lose the habits of cooperation with the rest.

Reservation of seats

92. In fact, had it not been for a strong and unanimous demand from the Muslim representatives, we would have recommended, at least as an experimental measure, the complete absence of any special provision for this community. The evidence of all the Muslim witnesses, and of not a few non-Muslim ones, is, however, strongly in favour of reservation of seats. The representatives of the Muslim community, it is satisfactory to note, themselves agree that reservation is the proper method through which their special claims should be secured. A common objection to reservation of seats for minority communities in joint electorates has been that candidates elected through such electorates are mere puppets in the hands of

the majority community and as such are not representatives of the community to which they belong. Such an argument, we must say, is inherently unsound. In so far as there is any justification for reservation of seats for a minority community, it arises out of problems that may be special to the community concerned. So far as general territorial interests and grievances go, these can be looked after by members irrespective of their community. As for the special problems, legislative or administrative, in which the Muslims' special position as a separate religious or cultural unit may be relevant, the presence in the legislature of Muslim members, by whomsoever elected, may be trusted to supply the necessary information and guidance. We are glad to note that this view of the matter is taken by the Muslims themselves and in view of the past and present understanding between the majority and the minority communities in the Sangli State, we can confidently look forward to a successful working out of the scheme of reserved seats for the Muslims.

Weightage

93. Weightage can never turn a minority into a majority. It only creates artificial barriers to co-operation between communities, which ultimately fail to give due satisfaction to the minorities themselves. Separate electorates and weightage in the number of seats have been on trial in British India for a number of years. The experience gained has not been such as to lead any friend of either the minority or the majority community to advise their adoption. It is only through the habit of common political action that the just claims of all classes can be permanently assured. We are glad that both the communities in the Sangli State recognise this fact and accordingly we have made our recommendations in the firm hope that they will satisfy all legitimate interests.

94. The population of the Muslims in the whole State is less than 21000. Thus, out of the 24 territorial seats, the Muslims may be said to be entitled to a little less than two seats. We recommend that two seats should be reserved for

them in the general electorates in two suitable constituencies. As observed by us in regard to the reserved seats of the depressed classes, we do not accept either the justice or the necessity of any principle of weightage.

Distribution

95 We recommend that out of the two seats to be reserved for Muhammadans one should be permanently allotted to Sangli town. The other should go in rotation to the Shahapur, Shirhatti and Mangalvedha Talukas. We are not very much in favour of rotation as a normal practice. Taking into account the comparatively limited political awakening among the Muslims in the Talukas, we feel that a periodical election in which they will be assured of representation of one of their own co-religionists through the general constituency will help in the development of their civic life. In the principle of rotation continuity of political life has often to be sacrificed, both for the candidate and for the voters. To avoid this undesirable effect we propose, as will be detailed in a later Chapter, that wherever representation is assured by means of reservation of seats, candidature should not be dependent on a residential qualification. This will help a capable and popular representative to keep his seat if by his record, he has been able to win the good opinion of his constituents.

96 Our scheme leaves Muslim candidates free to try and secure even more than the seats reserved to them. In fact in making our recommendations about the particular constituencies in which the Muslim seats should be reserved, we have left open constituencies wherein we were told the Muslims have a fair chance of getting a member elected without reservation.

It will be seen that the Miraj Prant Taluka, which contains about three thousand Muslim population, that is only less than that in Sangli town, is not included in our scheme of reservation. This exclusion is the result of careful consideration on our part. Considering the political importance of the Sangli constituency, we felt that the Muslim voters of that place should have the

opportunity of continued political activity in cooperation with other communities forming the joint electorate. On the other hand we find that in Miraj Prant Taluka the position of the Muslims in relation to other members on the voting list is such that with a suitable Muslim candidate, they might succeed in securing his election with the help of some voters outside their own fold. We therefore leave Miraj Prant out side the scheme of reservation of seats for Muslims.

Marathas

97. This is the place where we would like to refer to a demand for reservation of seats, which we have not seen our way to support. The Marathas, who number above 72000 and who claim to speak for an equal number of members of allied classes, are, in point of fact, numerically the largest community in the State. Many influential witnesses, belonging to the Maratha community and representing large and vocal sections of Maratha population, stated in evidence that with their numerical majority in the State, under any reasonable scheme of franchise, they would be certain of getting the representation to which their numbers and capacity entitle them. On the other hand, some Maratha witnesses taking their stand on what they termed the backwardness and the pliability of Maratha voters claimed reservation of at least 5 seats for the Marathas.

98. We wholeheartedly sympathise with the natural desire of these members of the Maratha community, that by their backwardness or pliability or any other trait, they should not be deprived of due representation in the Assembly. Had we for a moment doubted the feasibility of Maratha candidates of the proper type securing normal support from the extended electorates that we have proposed, we would have been inclined to consider favourably the suggestion for reservation. Our reading of the local situation as it exists now, and as it will develop under the new scheme of franchises and constituencies recommended by us, leads us to the conclusion that the Marathas

under all normal circumstances are sure to return to the Assembly quite a respectable number of members

99 The practice of reserving seats for a majority community is inconsistent with the whole theory of representative government, on which the new constitutional changes in the Sangli State are based. In British India, whenever such a claim was put forward, it was disapproved on intrinsic grounds. When reservation was granted to the non Brahmins in Madras and to the Murthis and allied castes in Bombay, it was purely for reasons of political expediency. Even in these provinces, experience has led to a discrediting and discarding of the system. In Madras, reservation of seats for the non brahmins has been altogether done away with. In Bombay, whereas under the Mont Ford Constitution seven out of 46 general seats were reserved for the Marathas, under the present constitution, out of 140 general seats no more than 7 are reserved. The continuation of these 7 reserved seats has in no way helped the Maratha community, as in fact the number of Maratha members of the Assembly has always been much larger than the number of seats reserved for them. On the other hand, the effect of reservation of seats in certain constituencies has not always been helpful to the development of healthy and vigorous political activity among members of the Maratha community itself. We have reason to believe that many influential leaders of the Maratha Community who, in the Bombay presidency, agitated to secure and to retain the 7 reserved seats for the Marathas, are now convinced that the reservation so secured was neither necessary nor beneficial. We, therefore, do not recommend a reservation of seats for the Marathas. With our recommendations for franchise already detailed and with the suggestions as to the delimitation of general constituencies and the system of voting that are to follow, we do not apprehend that the number of members belonging to the Maratha community in the new Assembly will be less than what some of them want to secure by reservation. We are, however, free to suggest that if actual experience belies our expectations the situation may be reviewed at a later stage.

Christians

100. Evidence, written and oral, presented to us on behalf of the Indian Christian community contained a demand for reservation of seats for that community. This community numbers less than 800 in the whole State. The demand originally was for two reserved seats, though in oral evidence it was reduced to one. It was also suggested that the reserved seats for this and other communities, to which reservation of seats was granted, should be filled from amongst a specially prepared electorate of these communities only. We cannot support either the demand for reservation of a seat for Christians or the method in which it is proposed to fill that seat. It will be seen that the method suggested is fatal to the underlying idea of having a joint electorate. The number of Christians in the State is so small that reservation even of one seat will not be fair to the rest of the community. Moreover, in our opinion, such reservation is altogether unnecessary. The representatives of the community assure us that the extent of education among them is much higher than in the other communities. They have no grievance against the present system of representation, nor have they any experience of seeking election to the Assembly in a general constituency. We feel convinced that if such an advanced and well-led community as the Indian Christians takes interest in the normal public life of the State, it will be able to secure all the representation to which it is entitled

Summary

101. The following is the summary of the reserved seats that we propose :—

Muhammadana		Depressed Classes		Women	
Sangli	1	Sangli and Miraj } Prant alternately }	1	Sangli	1
Shahapur, Shirhatti and Mangalvedha } Talukas in rotation.	1	Mangalvedha and } Kutchi alternately }	1	Shahapur	1
<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
2		2		2	

CHAPTER VIII

TERRITORIAL CONSTITUENCIES— GENERAL SEATS

Basis of Distribution

102 Out of the 24 seats available for distribution among territorial constituencies, six have been reserved for women, members of the depressed classes and Muhammadans as per scheme outlined in the last chapter. There are now 18 general seats available for distribution among territorial constituencies. In suggesting a distribution we have been guided by two considerations. Except in one case, to be detailed below, we have based the distribution on the relative strength of the population of various constituencies. This appeared to us to be the just way to secure an adequate representation for all parts and sections in the State. With a view to secure adequate representation in rural areas, we have tried to distinguish between urban and rural constituencies. Thus Sangli town with Sangliwadi is recognised as a separate constituency. So also Shahapur is constituted into a separate urban constituency, leaving the rest of the Taluka as a rural constituency. In the other Talukas and in Terdal Mahal we could not find urban centres with sufficient population to enable us to recognise them as separate constituencies. We have therefore, distributed the 15 seats available for the rural constituencies on the basis of relative population.

Shahapur

103 To this general rule that we have tried to follow, Shahapur to which we propose to award two seats in addition to the one set apart for Shahapur town may appear as an exception. The population of Shahapur Taluka is about 35000. To this must be added the figure of 4000 which is approxi-

mately the population of Dodwad, which, for reasons to be noted below, we propose to merge for electoral purposes in Shahapur Taluka. If numbers alone were consulted, so big a population may possibly have merited the award of three seats. Considering, however, the allotment of one reserved seat for women to Shahapur town, this would mean a total provision of 5 seats for Shahapur Taluka as a whole. The fact that one Muhammadan seat is to go to Shahapur in rotation would make the position even more difficult from the standpoint of other Talukas. For this reason, we recommend that Shahapur Taluka (rural) should have two seats allotted to it. Thus as against the two seats that Shahapur Taluka now possesses it will have four seats out of which one will be reserved for women. For the time being this might appear as somewhat an over-representation. But the seat reserved for women is special in character and future progress of women's movement in the other Talukas of the State may lead to a reconsideration of the distribution of women seats. The muslim seat would only occasionally go to Shahapur Taluka and hence the real accession of representative strength secured by Shahapur according to our scheme of distribution would be seen to be much less than what it appears at first sight.

Dodwad

104. Dodwad is the only territorial constituency, at present enjoying the right of separate representation which we have thought it our duty to terminate. On the face of it, the allotment of one seat to a constituency with a population of less than 4000 would seem to require special justification. In the report that was submitted to Your Highness by the Committee, which in 1930 recommended the organisation of the present constituencies, the following relevant paragraph on this subject occurs :—

“Another point of importance which we had to deal with was the distribution of the 12 seats for the Talukas. We do not think that the Terdal Mahal should have more than one seat,

although we are afraid that it would be difficult to allot all the 12 seats on a strict basis of population, area and revenue yielding capacity. If the seat thus released had to be absorbed by the Talukas, Miraj Prant would have a better claim to it than any other Taluka on any of the bases mentioned above. But in view of the electorates granted to Sangli, such as the Sangli Municipality, the Sangli Chamber of Commerce, Graduates (majority of whom reside in Sangli) etc., we thought that this one member should be granted to another constituency. Dodwad in our opinion should be such a constituency. Although there are other villages with a larger area or population than Dodwad, the latter has been treated as a separate administrative unit with a Vahiwardar, Police Station, Dispensary and School of its own. We are aware of the demand recently made by the trading community of Shahapur in an address to Your Highness for a seat to its Chamber of Commerce, in reply to which Your Highness was pleased to suggest the formation of a Chamber on proper lines. We propose that the seat should go alternately to the Shahapur Chamber of Commerce when properly constituted and to Dodwad. We believe that such an announcement would give an impetus to the formation of the Chamber. This is a seat which will be in reserve for allotment to any interest, which may prove itself worthy of it in the near future."

105 It will be seen from the above extract that there is no convincing ground on which the allotment of a seat to Dodwad is based. At the time when the seat was first allotted to Dodwad, the place was being treated in some way as a separate administrative unit. Since then Dodwad has been merged in Shahapur Taluka for normal administrative functions. As Shahapur and Dodwad, for all practical purposes, now form one administrative unit, it is only proper to suggest that they should form one electoral unit as well. That the framers of the existing distribution of seats themselves felt some hesitation about their recommendation with regard to Dodwad is clear from the fact that they recommended, firstly the alternation of the Dodwad seat with the Shahapur Chamber of Commerce, and secondly, its

final allotment to any new interest, which might develop in the State. It cannot, in our opinion, be justifiably said against our recommendation that a right to separate representation deliberately conferred upon Dodwad has been taken away. It is clear that from the beginning that seat was meant to be a temporary arrangement. It is now time that the claims of all areas in the State are put on some systematic basis.

106. In our visit to Dodwad and in some other places, one or two special considerations for the preservation of a separate seat for Dodwad were pressed upon us. Thus, we were told, and we had reasons to experience, that Dodwad is not easily accessible from the nearest centre of Sangli Administration viz Shahapur. Both the distance and the ill-developed means of transport are obstacles to regular and easy communication. We were also told, that the transfer of administrative functions in respect of Dodwad to the Shahapur Taluka has already created special difficulties for the Dodwad people. It was argued further, that the abolition of a separate Dodwad constituency would only add to their grievances in this respect. We are not in a position either to ascertain the nature of these grievances or to make recommendations in that behalf. Obviously, they are a matter for the State administration to look into. For us, taking the administrative association of Dodwad with Shahapur to be what it is, and considering the population of Dodwad, there is no alternative left but to suggest that Dodwad should form part of the Shahapur Taluka constituency. We expect that there will be enough voters in Dodwad proper to make their influence felt in the elections that will take place for filling the two general seats allotted to Shahapur Taluka.

107. In our opinion the mere distance of an outlying place from its administrative centre cannot be considered to be a reasonable claim for separate representation, without reference to the strength of population. Other considerations such as the status of Dodwad as an Inam village, having a special relation to the Ruler of the State, fall beyond the scope of

considerations, that are relevant in our enquiry For all these reasons we have after careful consideration come to our decision with regard to Dodwad

Sangli and Sangliwadi

108 So far as the remaining constituencies are concerned there is not much, which it is necessary to say by way of explanation As far as possible, as noted above our attempt has been to distribute the seats on the basis of population A problem of delimitation presented itself with regard to Sangli and Sangliwadi Some people had urged that as Sangliwadi is beyond the jurisdiction of the Sangli Municipality and as its life is more of a rural than of an urban character, it should be added to the Miraj Prant constituency We cannot see our way to accept this suggestion We are informed that both Sangli and Sangliwadi are under the revenue and administrative jurisdiction of the Ganapati Sansthan Moreover, the nature of the social and economic life in Sangliwadi is fast changing and is becoming more and more dependent on Sangli town In fact it is clear that for administrative as also for economic purposes the two places are tending to be unified For this reason we recommend the continuation of the present joint Sangli and Sangliwadi constituency

Miraj Prant and Shirhatti

109 The population of Miraj Prant Taluk is 16000 and that of Shirhatti over 45000 We, therefore recommend that three seats should be provided for each of these Talukas

Terdal Mahal

110 The total population of Terdal Mahal is just over 20 000 The nearest suitable number of seats that can be allotted to this Taluka is, therefore two This Mahal contains the impor

tant industrial town of Rabhavi. As the population of this place is only 6000, and a little over, we cannot recommend a separate urban seat for it. Nor will it be desirable, either on account of the inherent merits of such a suggestion or on account of the desires of the local population, to recommend the linking of Rabhavi with Terdal town to form a joint urban constituency. We, therefore, recommend the continuation of Terdal Mahal, as a whole, as one constituency and allot two seats to it.

Kuchu and Mangalvedha

111 We are now led to make our recommendations with regard to Kuchu and Mangalvedha Talukas. The total population of Kuchu Taluka is 34,000 and that of Mangalveda 32,000. They thus fall between Terdal on the one hand and Miraj Prant and Shirhatti on the other. Our recommendation, therefore, is that both the Talukas should have a basic allotment of two seats each. In addition to these two seats, at alternate elections one seat should go to either of them. It will be remembered that in the last chapter, we have recommended the reservation of a seat for the Depressed Classes in these two Talukas and its alternation between them. We recommend that both these alternations should be so timed that Kuchu and Mangalvedha at every election get three seats in all, one of the seats in one Taluka being the reserved seat for the Depressed Classes.

Summary

112 In our opinion this is a just and equitable distribution of seats among the various territorial and administrative units of the State. With the best of efforts, the difficulties of some special areas are bound to persist. We only hope that with an extended franchise and a suitable system of voting, to be recommended in the next Chapter, no part of the State will be without sufficient voting strength to influence the result of elections. Our recommendations regarding the distribution of

the general seats in territorial constituencies may be summarised as follows —

Urban		Rural		<div> <div>One seat extra in alterna- tion to Kuchi and Mangal vedha in such a way that this seat goes to the Taluka which is not for the time being sending a Depressed Class member through the reserved seat, which is also to alternate between these two constituencies</div> </div>
Sangli	2	Miraj Prant	3	
Shahapur	1	Kuchi	2	
		Mangalvedha	2	
Total	3	Terdal	2	
		Shahapur	2	
		Shirhatti	3	
			14 + 1	
		Total	15	

CHAPTER IX .

SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION

Voting and Constituencies

SINGLE AND MULTI-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES

113. Having recommended the reservation of seats for the Depressed Classes, Muhammadans and Women, the choice between single member and multi-member constituencies is already taken by us in respect of a large part of the state. But there are some constituencies, especially some of the Taluka constituencies, in which it is possible to introduce single member constituencies, if we decide to recommend them. This subject of the relative merits of the two forms of constituencies has been discussed at great detail in Chapter III of the Hammond Committee's Report. Their conclusion, for Provinces other than Bombay and Madras, was in favour of single-member constituencies; but for Bombay and Madras they recommended multi-member constituencies with suitable conditions. In giving their support to the principle of single-member constituencies they were guided by the following considerations

Hammond Committee's View

114. In the first place it is the simplest method of asking the elector to make his choice from among rival candidates. Secondly, single-member constituencies by emphasising the competing nature of the programmes and personalities of the rival candidates tend to add vigour to party strife. In course of time constituencies develop a decisive party colour and thus the growth of parties is promoted. If the formation of parties is considered to be a more important feature of the success of representative government than the adequate and correct reflection of public opinion in the legislature, single-member

constituencies would be easily preferred. In this matter the Hammond Committee attached great importance to the sentiments of local leaders and governments. As they were advised that single member constituencies were appreciated by local opinion, official and non-official, in Provinces other than Bombay and Madras, their final recommendation favoured single as against multi-member constituencies.

Madras and Bombay

115 As for Madras that Committee's recommendation was as follows. "On a consideration of the problem as a whole, and with the fullest appreciation of the objections to rejecting the considered opinion of a local government on a matter such as this, we have therefore decided to recommend the creation of a certain number of multi-member general constituencies in Madras in addition to those proposed to us by the local Government and to those necessitated by the reservation of seats for the scheduled castes." In Bombay, the Committee's recommendation was even more emphatic. The committee was struck by the existence of a number of castes and sub castes in the Province. The Bombay Government, with its knowledge of local conditions, had also supported multi member constituencies, to which the Province had become accustomed for a long while. In these circumstances, the Hammond Committee had no hesitation to recommend that the principle of multi-member constituencies should be adopted for the Bombay Presidency.

Conditions in Sangli

116. Conditions in Sangli State are in all material respects similar to those prevailing in the surrounding districts of the Bombay Presidency. Our own investigations into the problem of representation revealed the existence of a large number of major and minor castes. While hoping for the best, all these sections of the population are watching with anxiety their future under the new constitutional changes. A regime of single-member constituencies will, in our opinion tend to harden the

relative positions among the different sections in a constituency. A multi-member constituency, on the other hand, will give the minority elements a chance to have a concerted expression of their wishes. In the Sangli State, the present arrangements of constituencies are based on the principle of multi-member constituencies. We have not been told from any quarters that this arrangement has led to any dissatisfaction or to abuse. We therefore recommend the continuation of multi-member constituencies even where their existence is not necessitated by the reservation of seats.

Parties

117. We would like, in this place, to make a passing reference to the more general aspects of the question. All the recent development of thought regarding systems of representation is mostly critical of single-member constituencies. Whether single-member constituencies would necessarily, or at so early date, lead to the formation of strong parties is always doubtful. The peculiarities of party organisation in each country depend on many other more important factors than the system of representation. Where divisions of religion and caste exist along with several economic and political differences, a multiplicity of parties is seen to persist even with single-member constituencies. The experience in the Indian Provinces is on this subject no more encouraging than that in many other countries. If then a multiplicity of parties continues in a single member constituency, most often the representative of a constituency would actually represent a minority of the voters. In our opinion even on general grounds, so long as other conditions favourable to the emergence of a bi-party system have not come into being, the establishment of single-member constituencies will not help in securing a truly representative Assembly.

Methods of Voting

118. Having thus recommended in favour of the continuation of multi-member constituencies, we have to make our choice

between the various systems of voting. This subject has been dealt with in paras 44 to 53 of the Hammond Committee's Report. For reasons which appealed to that body, we also felt constrained to recommend in favour of the system of cumulative voting. In doing so we have given most careful consideration to the requirements of the local situation and to the sentiments of the leaders of the various sections of the people. The three main alternative methods of voting (excluding the system of the single transferable vote, which we could not regard as suitable for adoption in present day conditions in Sangli State) are—

- (a) the single non-transferable vote,
- (b) the distributive vote, free or compulsory,
- (c) the cumulative vote

Single Non-transferable Vote

119. The single non-transferable vote is a system under which a voter has one vote only which he can cast for any of the candidates who seek his support, but he can, of course, cast it in favour of one candidate only. It has been claimed for this system that it gives adequate security to the minorities. But the Hammond Committee reached the conclusion that the adoption of that system would not be in keeping with the principle of reservation of seats for particular castes. What is more to the point, no suggestion has been made to us for the adoption of this system of voting. We therefore conclude that both the single-transferable and non-transferable votes are systems which, at any rate for the present, are unsuitable for adoption in the State.

Distributive Voting

120. The claims of distributive voting, in its compulsory form, were pressed upon us with some energy. The underlying idea was, in constituencies where seats are reserved, to require each candidate to approach a number of voters belonging to

other sections. It was thought that if the compulsory distributive system is in vogue, canvassing on communal lines will be checked. We ourselves most strongly desire that elections should be governed by the merits of rival candidates and their programmes and not by communal and other narrow considerations. For the present, however, we are confronted with a situation in which almost all castes and communities, majorities as well as minorities, are apprehensive of their position under the new franchise and constitution. Crude as it is, they seem to find in the system of cumulative voting a natural defence against being swamped by more numerous or more powerful rivals. We appreciate the theoretical and the ultimate merits of the system of compulsory distributive voting. But we are equally convinced of the genuineness of the apprehensions entertained by the various sections of the people. We therefore recommend the adoption of the principle of cumulative voting in multi-member constituencies.

Minority Opinion

121 What applies to communal differences also applies in some measure to differences of policy and political creed. In the absence of the more refined systems of minority representation, we feel that the provision of cumulative voting is indicated as a desirable safeguard against the tyranny of the majority. We see no special virtue in the system of free distributive vote, which at present obtains in the State, and therefore we do not recommend its continuation. We take it that voting will continue to be by ballot as before.

122 Single-member constituencies and a scheme of distributive voting can be treated as practicable only when a considerable advance in the public life of the State has taken place.

Women's Constituency

123 We have recommended multi-member constituencies in which seats will be reserved for Muhammadans, Depressed Classes,

and Women We have also recommended the provision of cumulative voting in these In some of the constituencies such as Sangli it might be that at a single election five members may have to be returned out of which three will be competing only for a reserved seat In this situation, with each person having as many as five votes and having the liberty to pile them on one candidate the poll for some of the reserved seats is likely to be very meagre Moreover, there is some inherent impropriety in candidates being asked to compete at one and the same election for seats which are somewhat different in nature We expect that actual trial given to the system, under conditions obtaining in Sangli, will indicate the nature of difficulties that may be experienced We therefore recommend that, at any rate to begin with, there should be no special constituencies for women and that they should compete for a reserved seat at the general election

Hammond Committee's View

124 The Hammond Committee which had gone into this question rather carefully recommended the institution of special women's constituencies As this is rather an important matter, with regard to the arrangements to be made to give effect to our recommendations, we reproduce the following relevant extracts from the Hammond Committee's Report

"Para 333 Our own conclusion in the light of these discussions is definitely in favour of allotting all the seats reserved for women in Provincial Legislative Assemblies to special constituencies Our reasons are the following In the first place we cannot but regard the special representation which has been provided for women in the Provincial Assemblies as to some extent in the nature of an *ad hoc* provision, the importance of which will be particularly marked during the early years of the new constitution These constituencies will be both experimental and educative At present in one or two Provinces, and in some influential quarters, there is a distinct prejudice against women's active participation in public life In all, there is

among women as a whole at present but little political consciousness. There is no familiarity with Parliamentary institutions. The object, we conceive, of these special seats for women is to ensure that pending an improvement, women shall not go unrepresented in the legislatures. This was the view advanced by the Indian Franchise Committee (Paragraph 213), which paid particular attention to the problem of the representation of women, both on the electoral roll and in the legislature, and on whose recommendation the special representation now accorded to women is based. They emphasize that the reservation of seats was designed to secure that, during the formative period of the constitution, there should be in those legislatures a number of women sufficient to express their views and to make their influence felt, since it was uncertain to what extent women generally would be prepared to contest seats in territorial constituencies for the first few years."

125. The recommendation of the Hammond Committee was adopted in British India, where special Women's Constituencies consisting of both men and women voters are provided for the election of women members to the seats reserved for them. Our own recommendation differs from this system of a special constituency for elections to the women seats. Hence we have felt called upon to outline the arguments for the other system now in vogue in British India. In our opinion this is primarily a matter which should be decided finally in the light of local experience and sentiments.

CHAPTER X

ELECTORAL LAW AND PROCEDURE

Revision of Rules

126 In our report we have confined ourselves to an outline of our specific proposals with regard to franchises and constituencies and the arguments that lead us to make them. We expect that consequential changes in the rules governing the qualifications of voters and candidates, as also the elections to the Assembly, will be made by the authorities concerned. In this respect we recommend that relevant rules made for the Bombay Presidency under the Government of India Act, 1935, should be adopted as a model, with necessary modifications in the light of local circumstances, and of our general recommendations.

Voters' Residential Qualification—Definition

127 On a few points of revision we have more specific recommendations to make. In our opinion no person should be qualified to be included in the electoral roll for a territorial constituency, unless he satisfies the requirement as to residence in relation to that constituency. Such a provision occurs in part III of Schedule VI of the Government of India Act, 1935. It refers to the Bombay Presidency and explains the implications of the requirement as to residence of the voter. We suggest that this interpretation as to residence be adopted. Residence is defined therein as follows —

"A person is deemed to reside in a house if he sometimes uses it as a sleeping place, and a person is not deemed to cease to reside in a house merely because he is absent from it or has another dwelling in which he resides, if he is at liberty to return to the house at any time and has not abandoned his intention of returning."

Candidates' Residence

128. As a general principle, for the immediate future, we are in favour of the continuation of the requirement of local residence for a candidate offering himself in a constituency. We are aware of the fact that such an attitude appears to ignore two considerations. Firstly, that in the absence of a residential requirement the best available candidates can be put up in a suitable constituency without limitation arising out of their usual habitation. Secondly, the theoretical right of the electors to have any representative that they like also seems to be taken away by prescribing the residential limitation. We are also aware that this limitation has recently been removed in British India.

Local Apprehension

129. In recommending the retention of residential qualification for candidates, for some time longer, we are chiefly influenced by representations made to us on behalf of rural areas. It is admitted that public life in the rural areas is much less vigorous than that in urban places, such as Sangli and Shahapur. We have already recommended the creation of a separate urban constituency for Shahapur. We desire that for the time being the normal development of local public life and leadership should not be discouraged by lifting the residential requirement. On the other hand we do not wish to debar a person having a material stake in one constituency, but residing in another, from offering himself as a candidate in the former constituency. We, therefore, recommend that for all territorial constituencies, ownership of land or house property of the assessable or rental value necessary for the qualification to vote should entitle a person to stand as candidate if he is registered as a voter in any territorial constituency. Such an exception cannot be objected to even by the Taluka people, because anybody, who owns substantial property in a place, can hardly be considered a stranger in the electoral field.

Exceptions

130 Another necessary qualification for a candidate is, in our opinion being a voter in that constituency. One exception to this recommendation has been noted above. Another exception that we suggest is with regard to the Depressed Classes, Muhammadans and women. Taking into account the special nature of the arrangements made for these, and particularly the fact that the Depressed Class and the Muhammadan seats are liable to rotation, we feel that the residential requirement will be unsuitable in their case. We therefore recommend that persons belonging to the depressed classes, Muhammadans and women should be permitted to stand as candidates in any of the constituencies for seats which are reserved for them, provided such persons are duly enfranchised.

131 Another consequential recommendation would be that, for any of the seats reserved for Muhammadans only a Muhammadan for a seat reserved for the Depressed Classes only a member of the depressed classes and for a seat reserved for Women only a woman should be eligible to stand as a candidate.

Minimum Age

132 As regards the minimum age of the voter and the candidate, we do not see any reason to depart from the existing provisions under which the minimum age of the candidate is 30 years and that of a voter 21 years. We have not seen our way to accept suggestions to lower both or either of these limits. In our opinion when the right to vote is being extended on such a large scale, the age limits should be such as to ensure a reasonable maturity and experience among both the electors and the elected.

Education

133 We recommend that the educational requirements to be satisfied by a candidate in all constituencies, territorial and other, should be raised from bare literacy to passing the

vernacular 4th standard or an equivalent examination. In a former chapter we have set out our views on the inadequate indication of the intellectual and educational equipment of a person that literacy gives. We hold that unless a person has passed the 4th vernacular or an equivalent standard, he will not be in a position to take a useful part in the proceedings of the Assembly.

Property

134. We do not think that property should be a necessary qualification for a candidate. In our scheme of general and special franchises, we have recommended as alternative to property, an educational, and in some cases, a service qualification. In our opinion, the laying down of a property requirement on the part of candidates will be unduly restricting the normal opportunities of all voters to seek to represent their fellow citizens

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION

Principle of Nomination.

135 Our terms of reference enjoin upon us the duty to advise on franchises and constituencies with the object of securing a fully representative Assembly. In making our recommendations we have constantly kept in view the objects contained in the terms of reference. With the best of our endeavours, however, there will always remain sections of the population who, as a result of elections held under the franchises and constituencies to be newly introduced, will remain unrepresented. Similar is the experience in British Indian Provinces. In any legislature, in which all the members are not elected, and in which there is a section which is dependent on nomination by the Executive, the shortcomings of the electoral results are sought to be remedied as far as possible, by nomination. The Simon Commission described the normal function of nomination of non official members as follows —

“Nomination is resorted to for two purposes. In some cases it is the method adopted for securing a spokesman for a class or community which would otherwise go unrepresented. In other cases a nominated seat is filled by the Governor in the exercise of his general discretion, to redress inequalities or to fill up an undesirable gap.”

136 The progress of responsible government in British territory has been characterised not only by the increase in the proportion of elected members but also by the reduction of that of the official element. This is the nominated non official element has tended to gain at the cost of the official element, though both are increasingly dominated by the elected portion of the House. We expect that the evolution of the legislature

will not be characterised in the Sangli State by a less liberal policy in this respect than what obtained in British India. Nomination however is a matter which is entirely within the discretion of the Executive Head and only conventions can be recommended to guide the use of that discretionary power.

137. The course of our deliberations and the recommendations that we have made suggest two points regarding nomination which we must record in this place. A representative legislature, associated with what promises to be a semi-responsible government, has to be based on an electorate and constituencies, which mostly depend on the relative numbers of the population. But in the State as it is constituted, there are classes who hold a position which cannot be properly assessed purely by reference to the principle of representation. It is true that the position of such classes is becoming increasingly untenable in the light of the requirements of modern society. It is, however, possible that for a class like the Inamdars, Tainatdars and Saranjamdars, a useful place in the scheme of administration may still be continued for a time. In our own recommendations as regards elective seats in special electorates we have been able to recommend no more than one seat to the constituency composed by the members of these classes. The State authorities would be in a better position to estimate the administrative importance of these classes. If their estimate of the significance of the functions now discharged by Inamdars, Tainatdars and Saranjamdars justify such a step, we would recommend that out of the nominated members to be appointed by Your Highness, one should be representative of these classes.

138. We must also record our views on another matter, if only to avoid a possible misunderstanding. We have recommended the reservation of seats for Muhammadans, Depressed Classes and Women. If, for purposes which are normal in a scheme of nomination, it is intended to nominate a person belonging to any of these categories, the mere fact that seats are

reserved for them should not be construed as an obstacle in the way of these sections being considered, along with the rest of the community, for purposes of nomination

139 We have said in several places in our report that accurate and reliable information with regard to the numbers to be enfranchised under our scheme of franchises in the several constituencies is not available. We have, with such material as was available to us, tried our best to form a rough idea of these. But, obviously this will not suffice for the final working out of the new changes. We therefore recommend that the State should take very early steps to gather all the necessary information and to prepare provisional electoral rolls for the various constituencies on the basis of the suggested franchise. Any expenditure incurred for this purpose must be considered as a normal part of the establishment of a representative legislature. Even if a special staff has to be appointed for such a purpose, that step should be taken at an early stage so that the putting into effect of our recommendations is not unduly delayed.

140 Several matters arising out of our report will require suitable action on the part of authorities. Thus in view of the fact that elections on a large scale and with a somewhat complicated scheme of franchises and constituencies will have to be held, it may be desirable to send some experienced official of the State to gather information at first hand from quarters in British India, who are well versed and well experienced in these matters. As stated in a former chapter, such subjects, as the maintenance of a record of tenancies, will also come up for discussion. We do not desire to refer to other than purely electoral aspects of such administrative steps. We only urge that such adjustments in the administrative routine as appear to be necessary to give a fair and genuine effect to our recommendations should be favourably considered.

141 Many small details regarding the conduct of elections will have to be decided by studying and adopting the prevailing procedure in British India. On one point, that of

the method of recording votes of illiterate voters, however, we wish to record our preference for the system of marking the ballot paper. The system of coloured boxes appears to us to be unsuitable. This point, like many others, has been exhaustively discussed in the reports of the Lothian and the Hammond Committees. Though they did not wish to insist upon uniformity of practice among the several provinces, their own preference was in favour of continuing the system of marking the ballot paper, and to restrict to the minimum the personal intervention of the Polling Officer in helping an illiterate voter to mark his paper. Secrecy of the ballot is, in our opinion, a great necessity for the success of free voting. In the long run, experience shows that even illiterate voters can, by the use of emblems, mark voting papers in a correct fashion. Pending the development of such experience among the voters the assistance of the Polling Officer, given at the request of the voter himself, should be relied upon as an efficient channel of ascertaining the real preference of a voter.

142 We have tried during the last few months to give the subjects referred to us our most anxious and careful consideration. In our report we have recorded conclusions and recommendations, which appeared to all of us as valid and urgently necessary under the circumstances. Our investigations, toning and deliberations had often to be carried out under great pressure of time. But throughout this period we were immensely helped and relieved by the assistance of all members of the staff placed at our disposal by the State. To our Secretary, Mr P. R. Khadişkar, who carried out his duties with the utmost courtesy and efficiency, we owe our sincere thanks. To the other members of the Staff, Messrs S. D. Kaduskar, D. V. Vashta and V. V. Kulkarni, ought to go a large part of the credit for the speedy and smooth working of the Committee. On these members fell not only the normal duties of a clerical character but also the rather trying job of conducting a tour throughout the State. We record our thanks for all that these members of the staff, and other officials who helped us, did by way of rendering

our work as comfortable and fruitful as was possible Mr D V Vashta was especially useful in preparing all the relevant and available information, which was necessary for our deliberations The typing work that had to be done, on occasions, under great pressure of time was efficiently done by Mr S D Kaduskar

SANGLI,
20th June 1939

D G KARVE
M H LIMAYE
A R MAHISHI
R R BAKHALF
P R CHIKODI
B B PATIL
G K GODBOLE
H N PATWARDHAN
V G JIGJINI
*B D SHINDE
S A AMIN
P H PATHI

P R KHADILKAR
Secretary

* Mr B D Shinde disagrees with the Committee in respect of its recommendation regarding the constituency of Inamdars Tainadars and Saranjamdars He objects to the reduction from two to one of the seats allotted to this special electorate In his opinion the extension of this electorate as suggested in the Committee's report should be conditional on the two seats at present allotted to the Constituency remaining intact He suggests that the Constituency now suggested for the Handloom Industry should be abolished and that the seat so made available should help to retain the two seats to Tainadars etc

Brief Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

CHAPTER II

Extent of the Electorate

Adult franchise is the natural goal of every constitution based on the principle of responsible government which, in some measure, is now proposed to be introduced in the Singh State. The immediate step on the road leading to this goal must, however, depend on several considerations of a political as well as administrative character. Our general conclusion as to the measure of immediate enfranchisement is that the size of the electorate should be 10 per cent of the whole population. As the present strength of the electorate is 3.4 per cent, it is not expedient, either politically or administratively, to create at one stretch a much larger electorate than this. On the other hand, the Committee is satisfied that a measure of enfranchisement, which falls below this figure, will not satisfy the legitimate desire of the people. The qualifications proposed by us are calculated to confer the right of vote on more than 1/3rd of the adult male population of the State and on a considerable number of grown up women.

CHAPTER III

General Franchise

With a view to enfranchise at least 10 per cent of the population and, in that respect, to secure as much equality as possible among the several constituent parts of the State and sections of the community, we recommend the following Schedule of voting qualifications. Neither actual figures nor reliable estimates are available for some parts of the proposed franchise. In case it is found when the electoral rolls are prepared, that the measure of enfranchisement falls below 10 per cent, we recommend that

necessary adjustments so as to bring the actual measure of enfranchisement at least upto 10 per cent should be made along lines followed in our report

Details of Qualifications

(Ownership of land means holding land in one's own right and occupation of land means occupation as tenant)

1 Ownership or occupation of premises—

Ownership or occupation of premises of which the annual rental value is in Sangli town Rs 30, in Shahapur Rs 24 and in other Municipal areas Rs 12

In places outside Municipal area having a population of not less than 2000 and possessing a statutory village body e.g., a panchayat or a village committee, ownership of a house of the capital value of not less than Rs 400

2 Ownership or occupation of land—

Ownership or occupation as tenant, of alienated or unalienated land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs 10 in Kutch Taluka and Rs 20 in the rest of the State

3 Payment of Income tax—

Being assessed to Income-tax under the State Income Tax Act

4 Education—

Having passed the 4th Vernacular standard or any other equivalent examination recognised by the Educational Department of the State

CHAPTER IV

Women's Franchise

Special Qualification

(1) Being the wife of a voter having the following requisite qualifications e.g., of a voter who has qualified for a vote on account of (a) ownership or occupation of premises of which the annual rental value is in Sangli town Rs 60, in Shahapur Rs 48, in Rablavi Rs 36, and in other places Rs 24, (b) Ownership or

occupation as tenant of alienated or unalienated land of the assessed or assessable value of Rs. 20 in Kuchi Taluka and of Rs. 40 in other talukas, (c) Being assessed to the State Income-tax.

N B. A woman who, at the date of the death of her husband, is included in the electoral roll for a territorial constituency by virtue of his qualifications, should continue to be on the roll for that constituency, unless she remarries or becomes otherwise disqualified.

Not more than one woman shall at any time appear in the electoral roll in respect of the qualifications of any particular man.

CHAPTER V

Special qualifications for the Depressed Classes

(1) In respect of the qualifications arising out of ownership or occupation of premises and land the required figure of annual rental and assessed or assessable value will be halved in the case of persons belonging to the Depressed Classes. (Lothian Committee's definition.)

(2) Literacy as verified in the prescribed manner.

(3) Being on the attendance list of Watandar Mahars as per present system of 'budkhas or takshmas in each village (We expect that not more than 4 Mahars will be so enfranchised in each village)

(4) Being in the permanent employ of a government department or a local body and drawing wages at a rate not lower than Rs. 5 per month.

CHAPTER VI

Special Electorates

In view of the existing admitted need of functional and special representation, the Committee feel that the total number of seats at present allotted to special electorates should not be

materially altered. As new interests and branches of the social and economic life of the people grow in importance, these should be included in the scheme of special electorates. We propose to alter and add to the existing list of special electorates in the following manner —

The existing special electorates

	Number of seats
1 Smaller Municipalities	<i>To be abolished</i>
2 Co-operative Societies	—do—
3 Graduates (of Recognised Universities)	<i>To be reduced to one</i>
4 Tainatdars Inamdars and Saran jamdars (alinees of a village or part of a village or persons being entitled to an annual cash Tainat of not less than Rs 100/-)	—do—
5 Commerce	1

New special electorates

1 Industry	1
2 Labour	1
3 Hand loom Industry	1
	<hr/> 6

N B (1) The Sangli Chamber of Commerce is at present a constituency, which is designed to represent the view point of the mercantile community on public questions in general and on economic ones in particular. The Chamber is a body of long standing and from information supplied to us it seems that it has been doing regular and useful work. If bonafide commercial associations come into being, they should together with the Sangli Chamber of Commerce, form the Commerce Constituency. All commercial associations which have a standing of at least two years, are registered, and do not place any artificial or unjustifiable restriction on their membership, should be eligible for being included in this Constituency.

(2) **Industry and Labour** In view of the importance of both these classes we agree that an elective seat in the legislature should be allotted to each of them. If the Karkhandar Singh, which has been newly established, continues to function like similar bodies in British India, and if its rules of membership do not exclude any place of industrial employment to which the provisions of the Factory Act may for the time being apply or be designed to apply, its members should for the present form the constituency for 'Industry'. Other bodies of a like nature, if they are registered and have a standing of not less than two years, should be added to the Karkhandar Singh to form the 'Industry Constituency'. Labour should normally be represented through a constituency composed of members of recognised labour associations. If either of these two interests, factory owners and workers, remain unorganised, their representation to the legislature should be secured through constituencies formed as under. All places of employment to which the provisions of the Factory Act apply or are designed to apply, should form the Industries Constituency. And workers i.e., those who are employed in other than supervisory or clerical capacity and who have put in more than six months service in any of these factories, should form the 'Labour Constituency'.

(3) In view of the great importance of the Hand loom weaving industry, we propose that it should be formed into a separate constituency returning one member to the Assembly. For purposes of the formation of such a constituency the voting unit should be the head or the manager of a family which owns one or more looms and works them with or without the use of power and with the assistance of less than 10 hired labourers.

CHAPTER VII

Territorial Constituencies—Reserved Seats

The past record of the public and official life of Singh gives ground for a strong hope that the problems with regard to the representation of the Depressed Classes and the Muhammadans in the State will not offer the same difficulties as it has unfortunately done in many other places. We are very glad to note the almost

unanimous evidence, written as well as oral, of both the majority and minority communities, including witnesses belonging to the Depressed and Muhammadan communities, as to the unsuitability of the institution of separate communal electorates. Under the circumstances, we would have liked to experiment for a while with a regime of complete absence of special provisions for securing the representation to these sections of the population. In view, however, of the strong desire expressed by and on behalf of these communities, we recommend that two seats should be reserved in suitable constituencies for each of these communities. On a population basis, this is the nearest number of seats to which these communities are justly entitled and with the freedom to contest elections even for a larger number of seats, that is left open to them, we feel that such an arrangement may be taken as a just and adequate provision for these two important minorities.

For women also we recommend two reserved seats in general electorates composed jointly of men and women. We have received rather conflicting evidence on this point, but we feel that the best chances of women playing their due part in the functioning of a liberal constitution lie in the direction of their forming part of that common electorate, on which is built the whole structure of the Assembly.

The following is the distribution of these reserved seats that we propose —

Muhammadans		Depressed classes		Women
Sangli	1	Sangli & Miraj Prant alternately	} 1	Sangli 1
Shahapur, Shirhatti and Mangalvedha Talukas, in rotation	1	Mangalvedha and Kuchi alternately	} 1	Shahapur 1
	<u>2</u>		<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

CHAPTER VIII

Territorial Constituencies—General Seats

In distributing the available number of seats among the various parts of the State, we propose mainly to follow the basis of population. We desire also to distinguish between urban and rural constituencies, wherever we can reasonably do so. The following

is the distribution of territorial seats suggested by us. We might mention here that we see no inherent justification for continuing the seat allotted to Dodwad. Much as we appreciate the difficulties of the people of Dodwad, which are a matter for the State administration to look into, we do not feel that on any reasonable principle, the continued allotment of one territorial seat to a population of less than 4,000 can be justified.

Urban		Rural		One seat extra in alternation to Kuchi or Mangalvedha, in such a way that this seat goes to the Taluka which is not for the time being sending a Depressed Class member through the reserved seat, which is also to alternate between these two constituencies.
Sangli	2	Miraj Prant	3	
Shahapur	1	Kuchi	2	
		Mangalvedha	2	
<hr/> Total				
	3			
		Terdal	2	
		Shahapur	2	
		Shirhatti	3	
			<hr/> 14+1	
		Total	<hr/> 15	

CHAPTER IX

System of Representation

The urban and rural seats should, in our opinion, be filled by multi member constituencies, wherein cumulative voting is permitted. We are aware that objections have been raised in some quarters to both the principle of multi member constituencies and to the practice of cumulative voting. That single-member constituencies offer to the voter the simplest form of choice among candidates and that they promote the development of stable party organisation, are undoubted advantages of that system. With the principle of reservation of seats for the Muhammadans, the Depressed and the Women, however, we cannot for a major part of the constituencies, avoid multi-member constituencies. Nor do we, in the present state of inexperience, prejudice and apprehension among people belonging to different sections, desire to do so. The practice of responsible government, even in a partial form, will be new to the people of this State. The prospect of

the coming change is causing a flutter among most of the communities, majorities as well as minorities. Under the circumstances, we believe, that the utmost satisfaction of the claims of minorities both of opinion and community can only be secured by having multi member constituencies with provision for cumulative voting. We are by no means unmindful of the limitations and defects of the system of cumulative voting. While securing an obvious defensive advantage for minority groups, such a system is likely to emphasize communal and sectional feeling. We hope that after some experience of this system has been gathered by the people, the time will arrive when a more advanced system such as distributive voting in its compulsory form may be thought of. In a situation where even majority communities like the Marathas, who in our opinion are likely to secure in straight elections the number of seats that some of them are asking us to reserve, feel apprehensive about their effective representation, an idea of the inherent communal difficulties can be easily had. We are convinced that multi member constituencies, with reservation of seats for detached and important social groups and freedom of cumulative voting, are the most promising half way house between a regime of separate electorates on the one hand, and that of non-communal general constituencies on the other. A premature introduction of compulsory distributive voting is likely to place a premium on the demands of minorities for statutory recognition and for organisation into separate electorates.

CHAPTER X

Electoral law and Procedure

Residential qualification for a voter

In our opinion a voter should have residential qualification, as defined in Government of India Act 1935, in respect of the constituency where his name is to be registered as a voter.

Candidates special qualifications

1 Residence

A person offering himself as a candidate for election in any particular constituency must as a rule (i.e., subject to the

following exceptions) be a voter in that constituency. Persons belonging to the Depressed Classes, Muhammadans and Women should be permitted to stand as candidates in any of the constituencies where a seat is reserved for them. For all general constituencies, ownership of land and house property of the assessable or rental value necessary for the qualification to vote should entitle a person to stand as candidate, if he is registered as a voter in any territorial constituency.

For any of the seats reserved for Muhammadans only a Muhammadan, for a seat reserved for the Depressed Classes only a member of any of these classes, and for a seat reserved for women only a woman can stand as candidate.

2. Age

The minimum age of a candidate should be 30 years complete.

3 Education

A person offering himself as a candidate in any of the elections for the Assembly must have passed vernacular 4th standard or an equivalent examination, recognised by the Educational Department of the Sangli State.

In view of the changes in franchises and constituencies proposed by us, the rules governing the qualifications of voters and candidates, and the elections to the Assembly should be suitably modified, along lines followed by similar rules made under the Government of India Act, 1935, as applied to the Bombay Presidency.

APPENDIX I

Franchises and Constituencies Committee Sangli.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

N B —1 Copies of the Questionnaire can be had on application to the Secretary. Persons and bodies interested in the purposes of the Committee are requested to cooperate with it by sending replies, which should reach the Secretary on or before the 5th of May 1939.

2 It is not obligatory to reply to all points mentioned in the Questionnaire. Only those points, regarding which the replier feels sufficiently interested or authorised, should be touched.

3 Replies should be specific, not vague. Opinions should, as far as possible, be supported by facts, figures and arguments.

4 Repliers should state whether they are prepared to offer oral evidence in support of their written statements, if they are called upon to do so.

I

Announcement of His Highness the Raja Sahab of Sangli on Constitutional Reform

1 The announcement on Constitutional Reform made by His Highness the Raja Sahab of Sangli, on 22nd December 1938, contained the following clauses —

“(a) The number of members of the Sangli State Rayat Assembly shall be increased from 40 to 45, of whom 30 shall be elected

- (b) A Committee with adequate popular representation shall be appointed to report on the question of redistribution of seats and the qualifications for franchise
- (c) From the elected members there shall be chosen by me one member who shall hold the post of Minister in charge of Education, Medical, Co-operative, Local Self Government and Rural Uplift Departments. He will also be in charge of such works in the P W D as will be transferred to his charge. A detailed list will follow.
- (d) The Rayat Assembly shall have power to vote on the demands of the transferred departments of the Budget, subject to the condition that the pay, travelling allowance and pension of officers drawing a prescribed minimum salary shall be non votable

2 This Committee has been appointed, in pursuance of Clause (b) above "to advise on franchises and constituencies with the object of securing as representative an Assembly as present circumstances permit, with due provision for adequate representation of minorities, of special interests and of backward and depressed classes

3 In view of the principle of partial responsible government contained in His Highness's announcement, an expansion of the electorate has become necessary. Now, more than ever before, it is desirable to secure for all sections of the population normal constitutional opportunities to express their needs and opinions. While proposing a widening of the electorate, it is also necessary to see that the right to elect, and to be elected, is conferred on persons who can ordinarily be expected to make an intelligent and responsible use of their opportunities. The difficulties involved in preparing, maintaining and revising electoral rolls, and conducting elections over a wide area must also be taken into account, while making suggestions for expansion of the electorates. With a view to concentrate attention on important aspects of any alteration in franchises and constituencies the following points are being enumerated

Present Assembly

4 The following is the position with regard to the distribution of the 20 elective seats in the present Assembly and the franchise for the same

Name of General Constituency	Number of Members	No of voters	Population	Franchise	
				Rural land Rev demand	Urban Annual Rental value of house in Taluka town
1	2	3	4	5	6
				Rs	Rs
Miraj Prant Taluka .	2	1352	46433	40	
Kuchl Taluka	2	882	34406	20	24
Mangalwedha Taluka	2	554	32299	40	24
Perdal Mahal	1	419	20037	40	24
Shahapur Taluka .	2	1236	46556	40	48
Shirhatti "	2	934	45048	40	24
Dodwad "	1	157	3845	40	24
Sangli Town	1	2136	29818	40	60
	13				

Name of Special Constituency	No of Members	No of voters
Smaller Municipalities	1	69
Graduates	2	277
Land Lords	2	96
Chamber of Commerce	1	192
Co operative Societies	1	414
	7	

N B—All persons assessed to Income tax have the right to vote

Questionnaire

5. Constituencies :—

- (a) Under the new constitutional arrangements the number of elected members will be 50. From your experience of the working of the present scheme of distribution of seats and with a view to make the Assembly as representative as circumstances permit, what are your suggestions for the redistribution of the 50 elective seats among territorial and / or special constituencies ?
- (b) Do you think that the present distribution of seats as between rural and urban constituencies is fair and reasonable ?
- (c) If not, what modification would you suggest ?
- (d) Do you favour the creation of (a) single-member-constituencies or (b) plural-member-constituencies or (c) both ? Please give details regarding your suggestion.

6. Special Electorates :—

- (a) Do you think that the present scheme of special electorates viz. Smaller Municipalities, Graduates, Land-lords, Chamber of Commerce and Co-operative Societies is in need of any change ?
- (b) If so, what changes would you suggest ?
- (c) Do you think that any other special interest e. g. Labour, should be included in the scheme of special electorates ?

7. Women's Representation :—

- (a) Do you think that with a view to ensure that at least a minimum number of women find a place in the Assembly, some seats should be reserved for them ?

- (b) If so, would you favour election to these seats through special women's electorates or through the general electorate?

8. Other Qualifications:—

- (a) What should be the minimum age of a voter?
- (b) Do you think that a residential qualification in respect of a constituency should be considered necessary to qualify a person for the franchise?

IV

9. General Franchise.—

- (a) Is the introduction of Adult franchise desirable and feasible in the present circumstances?
- (b) Is the possession of property of some kind, in your opinion, a suitable test of fitness for the franchise?
(The term "property" should be understood in its widest sense as including not only the ownership of landed property but also the occupation of land or house property or the receipt of income or wages, whether in cash or kind).
- (c) If so, how would you propose to extend it in the immediate future?
- (d) Do you think that additional or alternative bases for franchise, e. g. education, should be adopted to correct the limitations of a purely property qualification?
- (e) If so, what are your suggestions for immediate adoption?
- (f) Does the present franchise create any unjustifiable disparity between urban and rural enfranchisements?
- (g) If so, how do you propose to remove it?
- (h) Do you think that a group system of voting in primary meetings of villagers is a more suitable method of conferring franchise than the one now in force?

- (i) If so, have you any practical suggestion to make?
- (j) With a view to secure a correct representation of public opinion in the composition of the Assembly, do you think that cumulative voting or any other form of minority representation e. g. proportional representation, should be introduced?

V

10. Women's Franchise:—

- (a) Do you think that nomination is an adequate channel for securing representation for women?
- (b) Do you think that the general franchise based on property or education can bring about a just and adequate representation of women?
- (c) If not, what alternative qualifications e. g. family relationship to an enfranchised man-voter, literacy or other educational test, would you suggest?

VI

11. Backward and Depressed Classes:—

- (a) What classes do you consider 'Backward' and 'Depressed'?

(The Lothian Committee considered that the depressed classes were those who are considered as untouchables. The test of untouchability, according to that committee, are (a) denial of access to the interior of ordinary Hindu Temples and (b) pollution by touch or within a certain distance).

- (b) Do you think that specially easy conditions for the award of franchise should be laid down for the members of these classes?
- (c) If so, what conditions would you suggest?
- (d) Would you favour a separate electorate or a joint electorate with a reservation of seats for the voters of these classes?

VII

- (c) Do you think, in this respect, that nomination is the proper channel for filling in gaps revealed at elections in the territorial constituencies ?

VII

12 Minority Representations —

- (a) What sections of the population would you class as minorities ?
- (b) Do you think that special provisions are necessary to secure adequate representation for them ?
- (c) If so, what arrangements would you suggest ?

VIII

13 Candidate's Qualifications:—

- (a) Do you think that special qualifications in respect of age, education or property should be required in a voter to enable him or her to be a candidate for election ?
- (b) If so, what special qualification would you suggest ?
- (c) Should the right to offer oneself as candidate in a given Constituency be confined to voters having a residential qualification in respect of that Constituency ?

IX

14 General —

- (a) Have you any other information or suggestion to give with respect to an extension of the franchise and redistribution of seats ?
- (b) If so, kindly give them

Sangli,
20th April 1939

}

P R Khadilkar,
Secretary to the Franchises
and Constituencies Committee,
Sangli

Appendix to Questionnaire

viii

Name of Town or Taluka.	Hindus.										Total Population
	Brahmans	Marathas	Lingayats	Depressed	Rest	Jains	Muslims	Christians	Total Males	Total Females	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Urban (Within Municipal limits)											
Sangli	6801	6049	1838	1238	2171	1757	3583	330	14082	12091	27373
Shahapur	2278	4280	820	391	2019	302	875	70	6168	5500	11704
Shirhatti	737	515	1588	164	1422	7	1218	7	2844	2814	5058
Habkavi	241	70	1500	274	3138	14	847	...	3170	3004	6183
Terdol	356	100	2103	420	814	1102	1110	..	3065	3075	6170
Mangalwedha	434	3417	881	1487	3364	45	931	...	5352	6207	10559
Sangliwadi	...	...	...	...	2284	31	50	80	1219	1226	2445

Rural (cont)																				
Miraj Prant Taluka	1005	19161	4398	6212	6748	5701	2885	233	23616	22817	46433									
Kuchi Taluka	495	13904	2372	5779	10486	399	969	2	17552	16854	84406									
Terdal Mahal	278	331	1828	933	2048	1620	640		3910	3774	7684									
Mangalwedha Taluka	316	5261	4534	4415	5899	86	1229	.	11181	10559	21740									
Bhatapur Taluka	569	14046	3397	1973	12313	271	2250	33	17403	17449	24852									
Shirhatti Taluka	782	1738	14446	2124	17454	619	2227		19982	19408	29390									
Dodwad	201	168	2142	243	906	37	301	..	1866	1270	3845									
	14580	72556	42049	25562	71666	12117	19121	761	131989	126453	258443									

N D --The figures are taken from the Census Report of 1931

APPENDIX II

Itinerary and Meetings

The following is the tour programme of the Committee. At all places oral evidence of the local witnesses was recorded in a public session.

22nd May 1939 :	Visited Karatha Mahankal
23rd May 1939 :	Visited Mangalvedha
24th May 1939 :	Visited Terdal
25th May 1939 :	Visited Rabkavi
26th and 27th May 1939 }	Visited Shahapur
28th May 1939	Visited Dodwad
29th May 1939	Visited Shirhatti
30th May 1939	Returned to Sangli
6th, 7th, 8th & 9th June 1939 }	Oral evidence at Sangli

The Committee met at Sangli for preliminary discussion and the adoption of a Questionnaire on 17th April 1939. It also met for discussion and adoption of recommendations on the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th of June 1939.

APPENDIX III

List of persons from whom replies to the Questionnaire of the Franchises and Constituencies Committee were received.

Sangli			
		24	Mr. A. K. Patil
*1	Mrs. Laxmibai Abhyankar, President, Women's Public Meeting, Sangli	*25	" B. G. Naik
		*26	" M. N. Karlekar
*2	Mr. S. G. Phadke	27	" D. R. Thorat
*3	" G. Y. Jadhav	*28	" G. R. Shinde
*4	" M. C. Bakshi	*29	" S. M. Patane
*5	" R. G. Deval	*30	" V. R. Velankar
*6	" L. M. Kulkarni	*31	" Bhausaheb Vaidya
*7	Miss Manutai Padalkar	*32	" V. K. Joshi
*8	Mr. J. V. Patankar	*33	" B. R. Shaba
*9	" V. H. Patwardhan	*34	" M. S. Hiremath
*10	" K. G. Abhyankar	35	" N. G. Kamatnoorkar
*11	Mrs. Sarojanibai Kamatnoorkar	36	" R. C. Khadilkar
		37	Mrs. Jannabai Merchant
*12	Mr. Daud Jafar Mulla	38	Dr. V. N. Desai
*13	" V. G. Gadre	*39	Mr. Maulvi Abdul Hanan
*14	" D. M. Kulkarni	40	" H. S. Sahasrabudhe and others
*15	" D. B. Vora	41	" S. M. Kaji
	President, Sangli Chamber of Commerce	*42	" Babalal Mirabhai
16	Mrs. J. L. Goheen	43	" Haji Dadabhai Haji Abu
*17	Mr. A. B. Phansoskar	44	" Ahmad Ibrahim
18	" D. A. Lotalikar	45	" Babalal Faridbhai
*19	" B. A. Patil	46	" S. K. Teermare
20	" P. G. Sahasrabudhe	47	" B. A. Daftardar
*21	" B. R. Shaba	48	" G. A. Daftardar
*22	" Abdulajiz Ismail Saudagar	*49	" V. K. Joshi
		50	" H. K. Risavade
*23	" K. A. Chaugule	51	" R. Y. Rajadnye
		*52	" K. G. Shiralkar

Karkhan.
dar Sangli

Sangli

53	Mr. V. V. Watve
54	" L. V. Ketkar
55	" V. T. Kumbhojkar
56	" V. K. Lagu
57	" M. G. Gadgil
58	" V. G. Shiralkar
59	" V. H. Gosavi
60	" K. G. Dikshit
61	" G. A. Karandikar
62	" R. M. Gore
63	" D. G. Patil and Leaders Sangliwadi
64	" N. T. Kulkarni
*65	" V. R. Phadke
66	" Chaturbhai Pitambar
*67	" R. G. Desai, Ugar Khurd
68	" A. A. Mule
69	" Iswarappa Ganga- ram Wale
*70	" B. T. Pachore
71	" V. G. Karmarkar
72	" Bapusaheb Jog
73	" N. B. Patwardhan
74	" B. M. Bhonsale, Pleader, Chikodi
75	" G. G. Kanethkar
76	" V. V. Joshi
77	" Rao Bahadur G. V. Patwardhan
*78	" N. V. Chavan
79	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Bar-at-Law, Bombay
*80	Mr. N. V. Chiplunkar, Ganpati Manager
*81	" D. V. Lagu, Mam- latdar, Miraj Prant

*82 Mr. V. K. Khadilkar,
Chief Revenue Officer

Kavatha Mahankal

*83 Mr. B. S. Kore
 *84 " V. P. Bapat
 *85 " N. V. Bidnur, Mam-
latdar, Knchi Taluka

Mangalvedha

86 Mr. P. M. Karmarkar
 87 " K. M. Lakade
 *88 " S. M. Kaju
(Inamdar)
 *89 " B. M. Vathare
 *90 " N. D. Badodkar
 91 " K. B. Killedar
 *92 " G. N. Kshirsagar,
Mamlatdar,
Mangalvedha

Terdal

93 Mr. P. J. Desai Han-
gandikar
 *94 " S. H. Kaju
 *95 " M. N. Deshpande
 *96 " K. G. Kulkarni
 *97 " V. G. Nargand
 *98 " V. A. Marlikar
 *99 " B. V. Deshpande
 *100 " R. G. Badamkar
 101 " G. B. Hudar
 102 " G. K. Patil
 103 " B. A. Bogar
 104 " B. A. Buree
 105 " Balappa Mahabal-
shetti
 106 " Rudrappa Avardhi
 107 " A. P. Mangule
 108 " R. A. Bijargi
 109 " V. Panchakshari

Terdal			
110	Mr S M Hanju	*143	Mr B N Shinde
111	D N Deshpande	*144	N T Kulkarni
112	H G Deshpande	145	, R S Naik
113	K A Havnivar	*146	S V Jog
114	C C Walesheti	*147	V S Kutre
115	V A Yadvad	*148	A Y Subhedar
116	A D Mahabalsheti	149	L B Modak
117	G B Bahlavi	150	M H Ashtekar
118	V D Avarahi	†151	Dr S L Tilve
119	P M Telginmali	152	Mrs Kamalabai Modak
120	G N Kokali	153	Mrs Ushabai Karlekar
*121	M S Bagaji	154	Kamalabai Vengur lekar
*122	M A Umda	155	Satyabhamabai Josh
*123	V D Arbhli	156	Sundrabai Khare
*124	M D Gunki	157	Savitribai Pethe
*125	R Hatarki	158	Bhamabai Ruyikar
*126	M V Pattan	159	Sumatibai Jog
*127	, S G Joshi	160	Saraswatibai Jog
*128	G R Bapuri	161	Parvatibai Jog
*129	H R Kulkarni	*162	Mr G R Paikar
*130	S C Khaddkar Mahalkari Terdal		Mamlatdar, Shahapur
Shahapur		Dodwad	
*131	Mr Vaidyaratna R M Joshi	*163	Mr C T Navalgundkar
*132	Dr N V Khare	Shirhatti	
*133	S A Karguppikar	*164	Mr N H Desai
*134	Mr H R Saraf	*165	S A Bhatkhande
*135	N D Deshpande Kardeguddikar	*166	, M F Dabali
*136	, K A Kabbe	*167	F S Bhorschetti
*137	, P L Ogale	*168	, D R. Deshpande
138	, T R Desai	*169	V D Mangsuli
*139	Mrs Gauravabai Jigani	*170	Y B Lagu
*140	Mrs Shanviravva Billur	†171	Abdulnabi Khadir saheb Khatib
*141	Mrs Radhabai H Saraf	*172	B B Patil Mam latdar Sh rhatti
142	Mr V V Magavi		

* Orally examined

† Orally examined but written statement not received

APPENDIX IV

A brief note on the Sangli State

The territory of the Sangli State consists of five Talukas and one Mahal viz Miraj Prant, Kuch, Mangalvedha, Shahapur, Shurbatti and Terdal (Mahal). They are widely separated from one another except the Talukas of Miraj Prant and Kuch which are close to each other and are within easy reach of Sangli, the capital of the State. The villages of the Miraj Prant Taluka are however, interspersed with those of the Satara District. All the Talukas and the Mahal lie between the River Bhima on the North and the River Tungabhadra on the South and impinge on five Collectorate of the Bombay Presidency viz, Satara, Sholapur, Bijapur, Belgaum and Dharwar and on one Collectorate of the Madras Presidency viz, Bellary. The Mangalvedha Taluka is the Northern most part of the State. It lies towards the South of the Pandharpur Taluka of the Sholapur District. The Terdal Mahal is surrounded mainly by the Belgaum Collectorate. Shurbatti is the Southern most Taluka. It is to the South of the Dharwar District and has the River Tungabhadra at the South Eastern boundary of a portion of the Taluka.

2 The State has a total area of 1136 sq miles and the population of the State according to the general census of 1931 is 2,58,442. The gross revenue of the State based on the average of the actual receipts from 1932 to 1937 is Rs 15,46,472. The land revenue system in the State is Ravatwan, similar to that prevailing in the whole of Maharashtra, the assessment being revised every 30 years. There are 244 villages in the State. Out of these, 11 are Saranjam villages, 31 Inam villages and 4 are what are called Maktamavishi villages. Thus there are 46 alienated villages. The languages in use in the State are mainly Marathi and Canarese. The Record of Rights Register has been introduced in the State but the Tenancy Register (E) is yet to be introduced.

Area, Population
and Revenue

3 The Council system was introduced in the State about two decades ago and there are regular Executive Council Departments and Law Courts which have been working on the model of those of the Government of Bombay for more than half a century Recently His Highness has been pleased to form a Council of Administration and has delegated a considerable portion of his own powers to it Out of the five members of this Council one was chosen by His Highness from the elected members of the State Rayat Assembly and has been put in charge of the nation building departments viz , Education, Medical, Co-operative, Local self Government, Agricultural, Rural Uplift and also a major portion of the P W D

4 There are five High Schools in the State, four of them are at Sangli and one is at Shahapur The Public Instruction High School at Sangli and the Chintamanrao High School at Shrihapur are run by the State The Sangli Education Society's City High School and the Women's Education Society's Girls High School, both at Sangli, are private Institutions which receive grant in aid from the State The number of primary Schools is 160 12 of these are Girls Schools 6 are maintained especially for the benefit of the Depressed Classes Depressed Class pupils are also admitted without any distinction to the ordinary schools 14 Scholarships of Rs 2 each are specially reserved for the pupils of Depressed Classes with a view to encouraging the spread of primary education among them The number of boys in the primary schools was 12 940 and the number of girls was 2 374 in the year 1937-38 11 boys Schools and one Girls School viz , No 1 at Sangli, teach the full vernacular course and send up pupils for the Vernacular Final Examination During the year 1937-38, 182 pupils were so sent up and 92 of these came out successful Primary Education is free throughout the State It is also compulsory in 64 villages There are five A V Schools in the State They are situated at Shirhatti, Mangalyedhi, Kavatha Mahankal, Terdal and Rabkavi There is a First Grade A V School at Shrihapur for Girls which teaches upto English VII Standard All the A V Schools, except that at Rabkavi which is maintained by the Local Municipality with a grant in aid, are maintained by the State The Willingdon College which is run by the Deccan Education Society, Poona is

on a piece of British territory just on the outskirts of Sangli. The subjects of the State thus possess every facility for obtaining secondary and higher education. The college has been rendered possible inter alia by munificent donations by His Highness the Raja Sahib of Sangli. The State maintains six free-studentships at the Willingdon College for the benefit of poor students. Since last year the College has been receiving an annual grant of Rs 2000 from the Sangli Darbar.

5 The Co-operative movement in the State was started in 1908 and in 1926 a separate department was created to develop and spread the movement. As finance is the greatest need of the movement, the State inaugurated a Central Co-operative Bank and itself contributed half the share capital. There are at present 87 Co-operative Societies with working capital of Rs, 11,59,542 and a reserve fund of Rs 1,25,989 and the number of members is 8,961. There is also a Co-operative Union for Miraj Prant and Kutchi Taluka. A Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank for the relief of agriculturists in Mangalvedha Taluka was brought into existence in 1936. The authorised share capital of the said Bank is 1,00,000. The Bank has commenced its work only recently. The Urban Co-operative Bank, Sangli, was organised and registered in November 1935 with an authorised share capital of Rs 1,00,000. The progress of the Bank is satisfactory.

6 There are six municipalities in the State. All of them excepting the Municipality of Rabhavi, in the Terdal Mahal, are at the headquarter towns of the different Talukas. There is no Municipality in Kutchi Taluka. Kavatha Mahankal the headquarter of that Taluka, being a small place, has a Village Sanitation Committee. All Municipalities in the State will now have 3/4ths of their members elected and an elected President, this right was conferred on them by the recent announcement of His Highness. In the case of the Sangli Municipality it will have a government servant as a Chief Officer on the same lines as laid down in the Bombay City Municipal Act for the Chief executive officer.

There are six Taluka Local Boards in the six Talukas of the State. Each Board consists of 3 nominated and three elected

members and a nominated president who is generally the Mamlatdar. Under the recent announcement of His Highness all Local Boards will have 3/4ths of the members elected. A Local Board Act on the lines of the Bombay Local Board Act is under the consideration of the State authorities.

With a view to develop the indigenous system of rural self-government, a Panchayat Act on the lines of that in the Central Provinces was introduced in the State as early as 1925. The first Panchayat started at Ugar has been invested not only with sanitary powers but also with the power of entertaining suits with a pecuniary jurisdiction upto Rs 100 and also of trying certain criminal cases. The Panchayat movement is progressing steadily though slowly.

7 Sangli is noted for its trade in jaggery, turmeric, tobacco-cotton, chilly and ground nut. These commodities are chiefly exported to Bombay, Nagpur, Gujarat, and the Punjab. As early as 1910, the Sangli Chamber of Commerce was brought into existence to regulate the trade. It was reconstituted in 1917. In 1934 a Supervising Board for the Sangli Peth was established with a view to secure on the Board representation of the agriculturists who bring their commodities to the Peth for sale. The Board consists of 5 members of whom two are nominated by the Darbar, (one from agriculturists and the other from other classes) two are elected by the Chamber of Commerce and one is the State Official nominated by the Darbar who acts as the Chairman of the Board. The other centres of trade in the State are Shahapur and Rabkavi. They export coloured cotton and silk yarn and cotton piece goods. Rabkavi is an urban place with a well established hand loom industry. There are four weaving mills at Sangli which produce saris and dhotis of various kinds for the middle classes. The products of the Gajanan Weaving Mills are popular and command an extensive sale. It has been recently equipped also with a spinning branch. The Vinayak Mills, the Saraswati Mills and the Balaji Mills are also progressing well. There are three oil mills at Sangli where oil is extracted from ground nut and other oil seeds with the aid of mechanical power. There are also two leather factories and 4 hosiery factories in the State.

8. The genesis of the present Rayat Assembly can be traced back to the Rayat Sabha established in the Rayat Assembly State in the year 1907 by Sir Richard Burke, (Captain Burke as he then was) who was the Administrator of the State during the minority of the present Ruler. He had found it necessary to devise some means by which the Rayats of every village in the State would periodically be enabled to lay their grievances before the Huzur in order that this would serve as a check on the work of the touring officers and would ensure that in some shape or other the various requirements of the villagers would come before the Head of the administration. He expressed the fear that one result of the scheme would be the putting forward of chimerical proposals, the prompt rejection of which would cause discontent among a certain faction and also of proposals which though good in themselves would be beyond the power of the State to adopt on the score of expense. However, he felt sure that sympathetically worked the scheme would at least do something to ensure the greater happiness and comfort of the bulk of the rural population of the State. The scheme was based on the principle of indirect election—Divisional Assemblies electing members for the Taluka Assemblies and the Taluka Assemblies electing members for the State Assembly. The State Assembly consisted of 14 elected members out of whom one was elected by the Sangli Municipality, one by the Sangli Traders, and two by each of the six Taluka Assemblies. Besides these, it had as Official members the six mamlatdars and six heads of departments. In the beginning the Asstt Chief Revenue Officer was the ex-officio President of the Assembly.

In 1930, the Sangli State Rayat Assembly, in the present form, was brought into existence by His Highness under Regulation I of 1930. As expressed in the preamble, it has been His Highness' constant and earnest desire for increasing the association of the people of the State with its Government in the administration of the State and the experience gained of the working of the Rayat Assembly was found gratifying and His Highness desired to take further steps for the purpose of enlarging the scope of their association with the Government. This Regulation raised the strength of the Assembly to 20 elected members, 10 nominated non-officials and 10 officials, of whom 4 were Councillors and 6 heads of the Departments. The

Diwan was the *ex officio* President of the Assembly. The Assembly was vested with the powers of asking questions, moving resolutions and submitting representations on matters of public interest relating to the administration of the State, except certain specified heads. The Assembly was also at liberty to discuss the budget. It was also vested with the power of legislation. The resolutions of the Assembly were to be purely recommendatory in character. A Rules Committee of four members — three of whom were non officials — was appointed with Rao Bahadur Lhombare as the Chairman. The Committee's recommendations with regard to Electoral and Legislative rules and Standing orders, as modified by the Diwan in Council, were sanctioned and introduced in the State.

The co-operation of the people in the working of the Assembly was found to be satisfactory by His Highness, who was pleased to announce a further constitutional advance in his memorable announcement of 22nd December 1938. The number of members of the Assembly was to be increased from 40 to 45 of whom 30 were to be elected. It was announced that from among the elected member one will be chosen to hold the post of Minister in charge of Nation building departments. It is worthy of note that His Highness was pleased to give effect of this portion of this announcement immediately, without waiting for the formation of the new Assembly.

9 The Sangli State ranks first among the Patwardhan States. The ruling family is descended from
 The Ruling Family Haribhat, the common ancestor of all the Patwardhan Rulers. Shrimant Dhundiraj Chintamanrao alias Tatya Sahab died without male issue in 1901 and the present Ruler succeeded as his adopted son. The full name and title of the Ruler of the State is Captain Meherban His Highness Raja Shrimant Sir Chintamanrao Dhundiraj alias Appa Sahab Patwardhan, K C I E. His Highness was born on the 14th of February 1890 and assumed full powers of the State on 2nd June 1910. His Highness has two sons and four daughters. His Highness has a permanent salute of 9 guns and a personal one of 11 guns. His Highness is a member of the Chamber of Princes and has been on several occasions elected a member of the Standing Committee of the Chamber. His Highness was selected as representative

of the smaller States to the First and Second Round Table Conferences His Highness enjoys first class jurisdiction and has the power to try capital offences

Her Highness Shrimant San Rani Saheb is a highly cultured lady who takes keen interest in all branches of the Administration Her Highness carried on the administration during the absence of His Highness in England for the Round Table Conference and still continues to assist His Highness in the administration of the State as Regent In 1929, Her Highness was awarded by His Majesty's Government the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal of the First Class in recognition of her public service in the cause of the Womanhood of India Her Highness has established a highly equipped Maternity Home at Sangli which has been doing valuable service to poor women Under the patronage of Her Highness a constituent Conference of the All India Women's Conference has been established at Sangli which generally holds a session every year.
